
Contra Crawford: A Defense of Baptism of Desire & Periodic Continence



Dylan Fellows
Christopher Conlon

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Baptism of Desire
& Periodic Continence**

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Dedication

To our wives who can have us back now. To everyone who provided feedback and support. To Our Holy Mother Church, whose restoration we patiently await. And to The Glorious Virgin Mary, on whose Assumption this work was finalized.

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Preface

Purpose

This book's purpose is to provide a defense of baptism of desire and periodic continence against arguments made by Reverend Dominic Crawford in his (2018) Untitled Booklet. Crawford proposes and advances positions which 1) deny the possibility and salvific quality of baptism of desire, and 2) argue that periodic continence (often called "Natural Family Planning" or "NFP") is sinful under any circumstance. Although we are responding to Crawford, his arguments are more or less representative of the common arguments against baptism of desire and periodic continence. As such, readers who have never read his booklet should nevertheless find our work relevant and contributive to these ongoing controversies.

Background

Some brief background to Reverend Crawford's booklet, although not necessary, will be useful. More than a year ago, Bishop Mark Pivarunas (Superior General, CMRI) refused to ordain Reverend Crawford due to his (Crawford's) beliefs regarding baptism and periodic continence. Bishop Pivarunas sent Crawford a letter with eighteen questions challenging his beliefs (Appendix A). Crawford composed a short reply to that letter in defense of his views (Appendix B). His reply was written on January 25th, 2017.

Since Reverend Crawford's initial reply, his arguments against baptism of desire have changed and he has seen fit to publish a new, longer defense of his views in booklet form (Appendix C). The format of Crawford's Untitled Booklet is essentially a long-form letter addressed "To His Excellency [Pivarunas] and Whom[ever] it may concern." Crawford begins with a short introduction and then replies to Pivarunas' eighteen questions. It is this (updated) reply of Crawford's which we will primarily be addressing.

Audience

The intended audience for this work is fairly broad. First in mind we of course have Reverend Crawford along with anyone who believes similarly regarding baptism of desire and periodic continence, since the bulk of this work is a direct criticism of those

views. But we do not limit our audience only to those with whom we disagree; for those who are in doubt about the issues, we hope that this work will serve as an instrument of resolving those doubts, and for those who happen to agree with us we hope that this work will set a standard of tone, content, and approach for engaging these controversies both online and in-person.

We do not think that it is necessary for any reader to be intimately familiar with the controversy nor the arguments from both sides, since we will regularly be summarize each. And to that end, the reader will find an appendix consisting of Bishop Pivarunas's original questions sent to Reverend Crawford (Appendix A), a copy of Reverend Crawford's (2017) reply to those questions (Appendix B), as well as a copy of Crawford's (2018) Untitled Booklet (Appendix C). These are all scans of the original documents. These are included to a) hold us accountable for properly representing the views of our opponents, b) for the assurance of the reader that we do not misrepresent anyone's views, c) for the convenience of the reader who may switch back and forth to see how our criticism follows Crawford's ideas, and d) because we believe that the Bishop's questions and Reverend Crawford's replies are prototypically representative of the *general* arguments on each side of the debate. They therefore serve more than just the narrow purpose of showing what the Bishop and Crawford *specifically* think, but the broader purpose of attesting to what those who affirm and deny baptism of desire *generally* think.

As to the audience of our work, one note of caution is required. In Chapter Five we will be discussing the lawfulness of periodic continence. This discussion unavoidably involves topics more suited to mature, married Catholics or those whose profession or vocation have relatively desensitized them to such discussions, such as clergy or medical professionals. We will of course discuss the topic with the utmost delicacy and dryness.

Overview

Our concerns about this Untitled Booklet's contents are multiple, and they extend beyond the mere denial of baptism of desire and periodic continence. Arguably more objectionable than the denial of these teachings *per se* is that the way in which they are denied is premised in a virtual abandonment of the Catholic

rule of faith. So before delving into Crawford's actual arguments, we will rebut the principles of Catholic learning for which he advocates. Throughout this book we will continually allude to and revisit this theme, because a dismissal of the proximate rule of faith (the ordinary magisterium) is the principal cause of these errors.

Regarding baptism of desire and periodic continence specifically, Reverend Crawford's arguments can only be maintained by a selective dismissal of the very sources he uses to *make* his arguments. His arguments fail to adequately consider the distinctions, contexts, and philosophical considerations that the Church herself used when teaching about these doctrines. Even if we *do* abandon the ordinary magisterium, the texts Crawford uses still do not justify a denial of baptism of desire or periodic continence.

Finally, we discovered that Crawford's scholarship and fidelity to Catholic source material are inadequate at best. With regularity Crawford made errors in transcribing and citing his sources. These errors range from technical *faux-pas* to the blatant manipulation of source material.

We are of the opinion that when an author sets out to engage in theological debate, scrupulous truthfulness is the best policy. As one moralist put it, regarding inter-Catholic controversies:

Above all, be scrupulously truthful. To all, friends and foes alike, give that serious attention which does not misrepresent any opinion, does not distort any statement, does not mutilate any quotation. We need not fear to serve the cause of Christ less efficiently by putting on His spirit (Vermeersch 1913, §§5-6).

With that spirit is our criticism and commentary offered.

Format

We have endeavored to present our comments and criticism in an ordered, predictable fashion. Most chapters will begin with a basic introduction and summary of Reverend Crawford's position, and then proceed with our rebuttal and supporting evidence for our claims. This procedure will be

generally ordered with topical headings which can be previewed in the table of Contents. A complete bibliography of references used for our arguments may be found at the end of this work. References will also be cited within the text, indicating the name of the author, the year of their publication, and the page or paragraph number (symbolized as “§”) where the cited or referenced text may be found. When citing primary sources (e.g. Ecumenical councils, encyclicals, etc.) we will endeavor to use Denzinger’s *Sources of Catholic Dogma* as far as is possible, since it is a widely accepted, widely accessible, ecclesiastically approved, and standardized text.

Two special notes regarding citations may be useful to readers. First, the citation style for Denzinger indicates the *paragraph*, rather than the page number in Denzinger¹. Second, readers may desire to consult the special citation conventions which are traditionally used for St. Thomas Aquinas:

Citation Style for St. Thomas:

ST = *Summa Theologiae*,

II, II = Part (e.g. I = First part; I, II = First part of the Second Part; III = Third part)

Q# = Question number (e.g. Q. 47 = Question 47)

a# = Article Number (e.g. a. 1 = article 1)

Example: ST II, II, Q47, a1 = *Summa Theologiae*, Second Part of the Second Part, Question 47, article 1

Disclaimer

We are not authorities. It is our firm will and commitment to faithfully represent the mind of the Catholic Church. To the extent that we, by God’s grace, do that, we are grateful for the opportunity to be an instrument of His will. To the extent that we, by human weakness, do not, we beseech his pardon. We submit every keystroke to the judgment of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

¹ Example: “Denz. 798” indicates Denzinger *paragraph* 798, not page 798

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Chapter One: On Catholic Learning

Introduction

Before diving into Reverend Crawford's actual arguments, it is paramount to first discuss the rule of faith. We agree with the quote Crawford provided from Pope Benedict XV's (1914) *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum*, when at the advent of World War I the Holy Father appealed for world peace and reminded the world's bishops of the importance of holding the Catholic faith in all its integrity: "Such is the nature of Catholicism that it does not admit of more or less, but must be held as a whole or as a whole rejected" (§24; Cited in Crawford p. 2). After all, Our Lord called St. Thomas *faithless* for doubting only *one* teaching (John 20:27). Given the severe burden placed on Catholics to believe the Catholic faith, it is a matter of serious urgency to discover what Catholic teaching actually *is*.

The obvious answer is that Catholic teaching is "whatever the Church teaches." This is a simple *and true* answer, but it becomes complicated in instances like these where the very point of controversy is precisely *what* the Church teaches in the first place. So we must step back and ask a more basic question: *how* does the Church teach?

Summary of Reverend Crawford's Position on Infallibility and the Teaching Church

In his (2018) Untitled Booklet, Reverend Crawford does not devote any exclusive space to discussing the rule of faith, but throughout the book he makes comments which, when pieced together, provide something of an outline for understanding what his views on infallibility and the teaching Church are. He makes a few statements in the beginning regarding what is and isn't compulsory for Catholics to believe, arguing that we must accept all which is solemnly defined and reject whatever contradicts that (p. 2). He has a somewhat longer and more rhetorical treatment of the issue near the end when he argues that the Church is not a democracy and that numbers do not matter for determining the truth (pp. 43 & 47). In reviewing his comments about Catholic belief throughout and piecing them together, Crawford's position appears to us as this: that the rule of Catholic faith consists predominantly in the solemn definitions either personally issued by

a pope or issued by an ecumenical council under the pope's supervision and with the pope's approval, and short of this *solemn* magisterium there is no infallibility, except when some teaching or another of the ordinary magisterium coincides with or affirms previously established solemn teaching.

Crawford's Exclusion of The Ordinary Magisterium and a Definition of the Same

Crawford's rule of faith excludes the ordinary magisterium. The Ordinary Magisterium consists in what all of the bishops across the world teach in union with the pope. This includes doctrines universally taught in sermons, letters, theology texts, catechisms, and so on—the “ordinary” ways of teaching, as opposed to the *extraordinary*, or *solemn* ways of teaching (e.g., ecumenical councils, *ex cathedra* definitions, etc.). This does not mean that only some work *personally* authored by a bishop would be eligible to contribute to the ordinary magisterium. For priests, theologians, etc. are all only allowed and approved to teach insofar as they are sent and approved to do so by some other authority, such as a bishop or even the pope directly. Their teaching, therefore, is tantamount to the teaching of their superior when it is commissioned or allowed by them.

When we use the term “ordinary magisterium” we are referring specifically to whatever is *universally* taught in the way just described. Even a short perusal of religious books will lead us to discover that authors disagree on various, legitimately disputed points. The ordinary magisterium refers to and includes only those teachings which are agreed upon by a moral unanimity. What authors have perennially *disagreed* about is instructive and interesting, but due to the lack of universality, simply not part of the ordinary magisterium.

What Infallibility is²

Now, Crawford says that “we are *never obliged* to accept *anything* that contradicts a defined Dogma of the faith” (p. 2,

² More advanced readers may desire further explication in this section. Note that it is beyond the scope of this work to discuss in intricate detail all of the aspects of infallibility or those closely related to it, so left unmentioned or barely mentioned will be concepts and distinctions such as infallible safety, passive infallibility, dogmatic facts, and so on. Our goal

emphasis retained). And of course we would agree with that, it is a simple restatement of St. Paul's warning against false teachers (Gal. 1:8). But the question is whether or not it is even *possible* for certain contradictions to occur. The Church's infallibility prevents contradictions between the ordinary and extraordinary magisterium.

The ordinary magisterium is *just as infallible* as the extraordinary magisterium. We realize this is an arguable claim to which Crawford and those who agree with him will protest. But we will set out to prove the claim. We will begin by discussing what infallibility is.

It sometimes appears that traditional Catholics in general do not have the firmest grasp of what infallibility means. To be sure, when it is said that a teaching is *infallible*, or that the magisterium (extraordinary or ordinary) is *infallible*, the word "infallible" is **not** merely a synonym for saying that the teaching or teaching body in question is *right*. To say that something is infallible is to say that something *is protected from even the possibility of error*. So of course anything infallible is, as a direct consequence, right—but to be infallible is to be something far more honorable and distinguished than it is to simply "be right."

Infallibility is a true and proper protection from God. When we say that a specific teaching or a specific organ of teaching is infallible, we are not just saying that such a teaching *happened* to be true, nor are we saying that such a teaching is true as a matter of course, such as how we might say it is "true" that a glass dropped onto the sidewalk will break. Instead, we are saying that as a matter of divine providence the teaching could never, *not even in principle*, have been false. It is no more possible for an infallible teaching or infallible source of teaching to be false than it is possible for Christ to have never risen from the dead. As Fr. Lyons (1891) put it,

[Infallibility] does not mean merely freedom from actual error... it means more, freedom from the possibility of

here is apologetic, so we wish to avoid being overly technical and to instead simply provide the "meat and potatoes" of the issue.

erring—freedom from the very *liability* to err (p. 3, *emphasis* retained).

It bears repeating: Infallibility firmly cements into the very fabric of our raw, ontological reality a real, true, and proper *impossibility* of error.

So, the idea that the ordinary magisterium is only infallible when it agrees with the solemn magisterium is an idea that depends on a fundamental misunderstanding of what infallibility is in the first place. Rather than seeing “being right” as the *consequence* or *effect* of infallibility, this argument views “being right” as the *condition* of infallibility. Obviously this is just a circular argument. We might as well say that we are all infallible time keepers—so long as we look at our watches. The word becomes quickly meaningless when it is used in such a way.

And observe how very quickly Catholic learning becomes inverted by this view of the ordinary magisterium. What do we call an activity where one takes some work or another, checks it against another work, and after checking comes to a conclusion regarding the work’s correctness? Our home-schooling Catholic parents know that this is called *grading*, not *learning*. So even if one says they believe in the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium, if they only believe what it teaches once they’ve checked to see if the solemn magisterium teaches the same thing, they clearly aren’t *acting* as though it’s infallible. Because they’re not *learning* from it.

Such is a fundamentally anxious and suspicious view of the Church. Rather than behaving with docility and submission, one is ever-suspicious of what is proposed through the Church’s *usual* way of teaching. A catechism isn’t viewed as an instrument of learning, but as a potential *trap*. Devotional manuals are spiritual Trojan horses and the approved works of saints, doctors, fathers, etc. are doctrinal decoys. All belief is *suspended* until some teaching or another can be checked against the solemn decrees. And as a matter of course, the ultimate outcome of this method isn’t one of enlightenment but of *abandonment*. One can only grade the Church’s effort for so long before exhaustion sets in. With this approach, the teaching effort of the Church as manifested through the lives of the saints, spiritual manuals,

catechisms, theology texts, etc. will ultimately be relegated to a dusty shelf.

Thankfully, anxiety regarding the ordinary magisterium's content can be dispelled quickly because it is quite impossible for it to be in contradiction with the solemn magisterium. Vatican I (1870) taught in its chapter on *faith* that

By divine and Catholic faith, all those things must be believed which are contained in the written word of God and in tradition, and those which are proposed by the Church, *either* in a solemn pronouncement *or in her ordinary and universal teaching power*, to be believed as divinely revealed (Denz. 1792, *emphases added*).

As Pope Pius IX's (1864) *Syllabus of Errors* made clear, error has no rights; and as Reverend Crawford said, we can never be *obliged* to accept error. By the Church, least of all! Can the Mystical Body and Bride of Christ *compel* us, with divine and Catholic faith, to assent to error? But she so compels—with *solemn* teaching—exactly that degree of assent from us to the ordinary magisterium. Clearly, this precludes the possibility of the ordinary magisterium teaching error.

The Apostolicity of the Ordinary Magisterium

St. Augustine, one of the Church's most eminent doctors, said against the Manicheans that "For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church" (Ch. 3, §3). But Augustine wrote in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, about a thousand years before the solemn definition of the scriptural canon at Trent. While one may point out that earlier councils, like Carthage, settled a canon, these were not instances of the solemn magisterium since they were only local councils. There simply was no solemn authority to which he could appeal regarding scripture's contents yet. St. Augustine could *only* have been referring to Scripture as proposed for belief by the *ordinary* magisterium.

The infallibility—that is, the *impossibility of error*—enjoyed by the ordinary magisterium is a teaching which was explicated very early on in the Church. One of the most notable Patristic examples

of this is St. Vincent Lerins' "rule"³ (434), which poignantly asserted that:

Moreover, in the Catholic Church itself, all possible care must be taken, that we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all... This rule we shall observe if we follow universality, antiquity, consent. (*The Commonitorium*, Ch. 2, §4).

St. Vincent's rule has unfortunately been misunderstood by many Catholics today, particularly those who adopt a "recognize and resist" attitude toward the Post-Vatican II changes and their authors. It is not uncommon for such types to argue that St. Vincent's rule compels us to believe only that which is universal in space (i.e., throughout the Catholic world *everywhere*) and time (i.e., throughout Catholic history *always*).

But St. Vincent himself dispels this notion. And perhaps anticipating that Catholics in the modern era would be inclined to hastily conclude before they properly understood, Cardinal Franzelin (1875), a Jesuit and contemporary of Vatican I, extracted St. Vincent's explanation. Franzelin explains that *universality* simply means the consent of the Church *at this present time*. Only when the *present* universality of a doctrine cannot be confirmed is it ever necessary to appeal to antiquity. And the appeal to antiquity is not an attempt to measure whether a particular belief was held *always*, but rather an attempt to determine if it was ever universally held at *any* point. *Either* universality **or** antiquity, by themselves, "suffice to demonstrate the apostolicity of a doctrine" (Sec. II, §§b-d).

The Church "Democratized?"

In other words, if a teaching is universal *at any time*— which is just another way of saying that if a teaching is proposed by the ordinary magisterium *at any time*—this alone suffices to prove that the teaching is truly Catholic doctrine. Now, Reverend Crawford makes one of his lengthier arguments by contending that numbers don't matter when it comes to determining what the Church teaches. He rhetorically asks,

Do you deny a Catholic Dogma because you are influenced by the 'number of people?' Do you think the Catholic

³ This is also sometimes called the "Vincentian Canon."

Church is a Democratic Society made up of fallible bishops and theologians, or is the Church a Monarchial Society founded by Christ upon the infallibility of Peter, as its Head and Supreme Ruler? (p. 47)

But he presents a false dichotomy. Solemn teaching *itself* frequently justifies its conclusions based on the assent of the ordinary magisterium.

For instance, in explaining how *papal* infallibility can be known to be a divinely revealed truth, Vatican I argues in part from the universal assent of the Church (Denz. 1836). That is to say, the Vatican Council regarded as *a proof of divinely revealed truth* the universal activity of the world's bishops. Pope Pius XII, in *Munificentissimus Deus* (1950) provides a similar rationale for the definition of the Assumption (Denz. 2332). At the Council of Vienne (1312), Pope Clement V discusses whether or not grace and virtue are communicated as habits to infants at baptism, and concludes that they are with the following justification:

Forming grace and virtue are conferred on children as on adults [is the opinion which is] more probable, more consonant, and *more in agreement with the words of the saints and the modern doctors of theology*" (Denz. 483, *emphasis added*).

Later we will see that Reverend Crawford actually *cites* the Council of Vienne, but ignores this aspect of it. At any rate, the presence of the ordinary magisterium is *tremendously* difficult to avoid, even in the solemn texts themselves.

The "argument against numbers" offered by Crawford is just a very plain strawman. When we or others insist on the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium and the compulsory nature of Catholic belief toward it, our insistence has nothing *at all* to do with "democratizing" the Church or claiming that whatever a majority believes is true by virtue of the sheer force of numbers. Pope Leo X (1520) did not only have *numbers* in mind when he condemned Martin Luther for saying:

[Condemned proposition of Martin Luther, no. 28] If the pope with a great part of the Church thought so and so, he would not err; still it is not a sin or heresy to think the contrary, especially in a matter not necessary for salvation,

until one alternative is condemned and another approved by a general Council. (Denz. 768)

On the contrary, Pope Leo was very probably just sensitive to exactly what we have been arguing.

Still, anxieties may persist over whether or not the ordinary magisterium can be infallible without undermining the supremacy of Peter's Office. But these anxieties are unwarranted. Consider that while we may legitimately say "the Church is infallible" and just as legitimately say "the pope is infallible" or "This ecumenical council is infallible," there is only *one* infallibility, and that is the infallibility of the *pope*. As Parente (1941) adroitly explains in his *Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology*:

As man's life is one but derives from the soul and is diffused through all the body, so infallibility is diffused and circulates in the whole Church, both in the teaching Church and in the learning Church, but dependently on the head (pp. 142-43).

The infallibility of the ordinary magisterium *depends* on the pope, and is in fact a *consequence* of his own infallibility as supreme teacher of the Church. So as we see, what all the bishops do *against* the pope, or *when there is no pope*, is in no way a legitimate exercise of the ordinary magisterium, and is in fact not the ordinary magisterium at all. But what they all do *dependent* on the pope is most certainly infallible.

Sedevacantists *in particular* (among whom Crawford counts himself) make a point of keeping this in mind, because it solves so many of the theological dilemmas caused by Vatican II. Without a pope, there is no active infallibility in the Church, and nothing to protect the vast majority of her bishops from teaching all manner of error, just as happened at Vatican II.

The infallibility of the ordinary magisterium *proceeds* from the pope, so we know that if all of his bishops teach something that he is also teaching, or if all of his bishops teach something and he simply refrains from what Vatican I described as "the right and duty of proscribing [i.e., condemning or censuring error]" (Denz. 1798), then we know that the teaching is *dependent* upon him, and surely free from any error. The ordinary magisterium is not in any way at all somehow *detractive* of the pope's infallibility.

On the contrary, it is a logical consequence thereof, one which testifies to the sheer splendor, scope, and majesty of papal infallibility.

Besides, the Church's *indefectibility* actually depends on the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium. For, as St. Augustine and St. Vincent Lerins both implied earlier, and as all ecclesiologists admit, Catholics quite naturally *learn* from it—not from the solemn texts, which are issued, at best, once every three generations or so. The ordinary magisterium is often called the *proximate* rule of faith, precisely because it is *nearest* to Catholic life and learning, and has more influence over what the Church believes at a given moment in time than anything else. Consider St. Robert Bellarmine (1588), the Doctor of the Papacy, great counter-reformationist, and contemporary of the Council of Trent, who treats the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium as a necessary safeguard of the Church's indefectibility:

The Church absolutely cannot err, neither in matters absolutely necessary, nor in others which must be believed or proposed that we must do, whether they are expressly held in scriptures or not... [By this we mean] that which all bishops teach as pertaining to the faith necessarily is true and *de fide* (p. 320, *emphasis retained*)⁴.

Because:

If all bishops would err, the whole Church would also err, *because the people are held to follow their own pastors*, by what Our Lord says in Luke 'He who hears you hears Me' (Luke X) and 'whatsoever they say, do (Mat. XXIII).' (p.323, *emphasis added*)

The Church cannot universally err for even a *nanosecond*, so it follows neatly that she would employ a *persistent* and *ordinary* rule of infallible teaching on which Catholics could always rely.

⁴ Keep in mind that St. Robert is the Doctor of the *Papacy*. He was the *premiere* theologian used at Vatican I, with his defense of dozens of popes against the charges of heresy levied from protestants was instrumental in providing needed doctrinal and historical clarity to (naturally speaking) inspire the required confidence for the definition of papal infallibility at Vatican I. St. Robert certainly did not regard the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium as a *threat* to the Church's constitution or Peter's primacy, on the contrary he saw it as a necessary *consequence* of each.

A “Simple” Catholic Faith

Now, even with all of this said, we know that Reverend Crawford relies heavily on a certain rhetoric of “simpleness” or “plainness” in doctrine. Even with the best of authorities, including solemn ones—which by his own criteria should settle the matter—we will hear that:

A dogma of the Catholic Church is defined once and for all and a dogma reads as it was once defined. (p. 2).

In support of this claim, he cites Vatican I:

The doctrine of the faith which God has revealed has not been proposed to human intelligences to be perfected by them as if it were a philosophical system, but as a divine deposit entrusted to the Spouse of Christ to be faithfully guarded and infallibly interpreted. Hence the sense, too, of the sacred dogmas is that which our Holy Mother the Church has once declared, nor is this sense ever to be abandoned on plea or pretext of a more profound comprehension of the truth. (cited in Crawford, p. 2, Denz. 1800).

If it were the case that the Catholic Church’s solemn definitions were intended, exclusively, to be “read as they were once defined,” why does the Church, when teaching about how she should be understood, fail to say anything of the sort? We can read it again and again, and see no expression *at all* indicating what Crawford proposes. She emphasizes instead *the sense* of some doctrine or another, and her own *interpretation* of doctrine. And the corresponding anathema reads:

If anyone shall have said that it is possible that to the dogmas declared by the Church a meaning must sometimes be attributed according to the progress of science, different from that which the Church has understood and understands: let him be anathema [cf. n.1800]. (Denz. 1818, *emphasis added*).

Vatican I emphasizes the Church’s role in *interpreting* doctrine—but that which “reads for itself” requires no interpretation. Vatican I emphasizes the Church’s intended *sense* and *understanding* of doctrine, not “the way the words read.” From this emphasis—on understanding, sense, and interpretation—it follows that “the way the words read” is not necessarily the way the Church interprets or understands their *sense*. Indeed, even a brief perusal of any ecumenical text will reveal pretty quickly that solemn councils

rarely provide *exhaustive* treatments on any particular tenet of faith; solemn councils are only called to settle matters of disputes, and they focus on those quite narrowly, not expansive catechetics. And that is all the better for the Catholic learner! It means that from one doctrine to the next, the *sense* of a given teaching, or the Church's *understanding* of a given teaching, is almost invariably more expansive, illuminative, and instructive than "the way it reads" in a vacuum.

The Catholic faith is something rich, expansive, and of considerable scope. As St. Paul says:

O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!" (Rom. 11:33).

Or as Saint John decided to conclude his gospel:

But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written" (John 21:25).

The Catholic faith is at once *simple* and *profound*. Let's remember that this is the same Church to which belong the greatest and most erudite minds to have ever lived—Aquinas, Augustine, Bellarmine, et al.—as well as the eight year old child making his First Holy Communion, and the mild, aging grandmother quietly praying her daily rosary.

And we should not assume that these things are contradictory. Consider that Our Lord spoke in parables, but he also said "let your speech be yea, yea, no, no" (Mat. 5:37). He said "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). He said "He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth" (Mat. 12:30) and when the apostles forbade one who was not a follower of Him from exorcising, He rebuked them saying "Do not forbid him. For there is no man that doth a miracle in my name, and can soon speak ill of me. For he that is not against you, is for you" (Mark 9: 38-39). If we find contradictions where there should be none—whether in scripture or the Church's teaching—let us be humble and assume that we are the problem. And then let us strive to perfect our understanding, and if that is

too much, let us simply resolve to believe what the Church teaches, placing our mind—which is our soul—in her hands.

We say this because the present undertaking is underscored by a variety of artificial tensions, such as the notion that baptism cannot both be necessary *and* also be supplied for through baptism of desire, or that periodic continence cannot be lawful because it contradicts Pope Pius XI. Rather than jump to these conclusions—conclusions *not* shared by the ordinary magisterium of the Church—why not seek instead to understand how there simply *is no contradiction*? When we reject the Church's ordinary teaching we are rejecting the *means* by which apparent contradictions are resolved. It is in peacefully *learning* from this proximate rule of faith—the ordinary magisterium—that we are able to have a *simple* faith. On this point, allow us to quote at length Dr. Ward (1880), an eminent Catholic author whose work on the Church's doctrinal authority was given papal commendation by Pope Pius IX while Vatican I was in session, only two weeks prior to the definition of papal infallibility:

He who holds that the Church is infallible only in her Definitions, studies divine truth by a method which we must maintain to be characteristically Protestant. He takes for his principles these Definitions (as contained e.g. in Denzinger's small volume) and manipulates them according to his own private views of history and logic, with no further deference or submission to the living Church. Now such an extravagance as this is *by absolute necessity confined to highly-educated intellects*. The ordinary believer has no more power of proceeding by such a method, than by the more openly Protestant maxim of private judgment on scripture... [Most Catholics] well know that, if they would learn their religion, they must open their heart unreservedly to the Church's full influence; study for their guidance those manuals and spiritual books, which she places in their hand; listen with docility to the instruction of her ministers [and] practise those duties which she prescribes... Is there any one who would openly say that there is a "royal road" to religious truth? That the highly cultivated intellect is to seek it by a method essentially different from that accessible to the ordinary believer? That far less deference is due to the Church's

practical guidance from the former than from the latter? An affirmative answer to this question is involved in the opinion which we are combating; *but such an answer is so obviously and monstrously anti-Catholic, that no one will venture expressly to give it* (pp. 70-71, *emphasis added*)

With the foregoing in mind, we are content to propose that the rhetorical notion of “simple Catholicism” consisting in a reliance only on solemn texts is rendered dubious (at the very least). We must—obviously—care about *truth*, whether it is simple or otherwise. Let us not allow our affection for what is simple supplant our affection for what is *true* (although we would hardly go as far as to say that the two contend with each other).

Concluding Thoughts

As we begin to conclude this chapter, we must note that Reverend Crawford does claim that:

We are not strictly obliged to believe *only* in the Dogmas of the Church because not everything has been defined as a Catholic Dogma, this is obvious (p. 2, *emphasis added*).

By “dogmas of the Church” we understand him to mean that which is solemnly defined (this seems obvious, given what he says elsewhere). But he rejects all of the reasons we’ve put forward supporting the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium, and we cannot help but wonder what reasons—and at that, “obvious” ones, as he calls them—are *left* for believing anything that isn’t solemnly defined. No doubt it is to the *comfort* of the average Catholic to assent to universally taught and believed (but never defined) doctrines such as Our Lady’s perpetual virginity, or the sainthoods of Ss. Peter, Paul, Joseph, and all the rest who were canonized before the Middle Ages⁵. But mere *comfort* and familiarity with an idea isn’t a good enough reason to believe it. The uncomfortable fact that Crawford and those who commit to his rule of faith will need to grapple with is that the *vast majority* of what they believe enjoys no solemn approval from the Church. That means, *in principle*, those beliefs can be wrong. Reverend Crawford says such beliefs don’t contradict solemn teaching. That

⁵ The first thousand or so years of canonizations all came about through organic, popular acclaim; there are no “solemn decrees” canonizing any of the apostles, Church Fathers, or any other saints before the middle ages.

is of course true, but *only for now*. Until such doctrines are solemnly defined, by what *principle* can Crawford say that they are unassailably **true**? We have given all of our reasons, what are his?

Sadly, it seems that the only purpose served by Crawford's admittance that non-solemn teaching can be believed is to keep the door open for a few select non-solemn texts he thinks support his argument. He is certainly quick to close that door at the slightest hint of anything that challenges his position. Hopefully he will keep it open long enough for the splendor of the Church's ordinary teaching to shine through. *That is true comfort* to Catholic belief.

Summary

- We have explained that infallibility is not merely a constant correctness, but a true and proper protection from God's divine providence *preventing even the possibility of error*; and we have shown that with this understanding of infallibility, it makes no sense to speak of the ordinary magisterium as infallible "only when" it affirms some other infallible teaching.
- We have gone to doctors of the Church to show how the Church's infallibility in her universal ordinary teaching is something that's been recognized, without qualification, since the beginning of the Church; these same doctors along with later theologians explain that doctrines taught by ordinary teaching are infallible if they are *ever* (not *always*) universally held.
- We have also witnessed solemn texts that have justified their definitions on the very grounds that they (the definitions) affirm ordinary teaching.
- We have shown that the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium in no way detracts from papal infallibility but in fact *proceeds* from it; and further, that the infallibility of the ordinary magisterium has nothing at all to do with raw numbers but the requirements of an indefectible Church, which, to *be* indefectible, must have a persistent *proximate* rule of infallible faith.
- We have addressed Crawford's contention that the Catholic faith is "simple" because it can be known from solemn

pronouncements “as they read” by pointing to the very same quotes he uses from Vatican I and noticing that the Church emphasizes *understanding* and the *sense* of doctrine—not “literal words,” “simple meanings,” or anything of the sort.

- We have turned to scripture to show that if one is *looking* for contradictions they will find them, and we proposed instead that one turn to the Church, especially her ordinary magisterium, if one truly wishes to be a simple Catholic of upright belief.

As we noted in our preface, there is arguably nothing more important to this work than the rule of faith. For, even if someone manages to believe one doctrine—or even all doctrines—if their rule of faith is faulty, it is only a matter of time before they fall into error again. We must not only believe what is right, but we must *believe* rightly. With that said, we can now proceed with our commentary and criticism of Reverend Crawford’s main arguments.

Chapter Two: On Justification

Introduction

At bottom, it is the state of justification which is necessary to enter Heaven. Justification includes and presupposes all the necessary individual components which are required for salvation. To be justified is nothing other than to be in the state of sanctifying grace. Of course, a person who is in the state of sanctifying grace *now* might sadly lose that state, and may die outside of it—in which case they are infallibly reprobate. But, as all Catholics know, to *die* in the state of sanctifying grace—i.e., to die *justified*—is to go to Heaven. We agree with Reverend Crawford that only those who die justified will reach Heaven. The point of disagreement is *how* one can be justified.

In this chapter we will refute Reverend Crawford's arguments about justification and baptism of desire. We believe the ordinary magisterium's teaching on baptism⁶ is perfectly clear and therefore definitive on the matter so we will not avoid such texts when arguing against him, but we will also use Trent itself to reveal that his position is gravely mistaken. In addition to overcoming his arguments, we will develop our own arguments and show that baptism of desire is not only taught by the ordinary magisterium, but by *Trent itself*.

Summary and Evolution of Reverend Crawford's Position

There is probably no greater change in Crawford's position than the change his views on justification underwent between the publication of his 2017 replies and the publication of his 2018 booklet. In his 2017 replies, Crawford carried on in the tradition of Fr. Leonard Feeney and Fr. James Wathen, arguing that

A soul can be justified before the actual reception of the sacrament [he cites St. Paul and Cornelius as examples]... [But] They still must persevere, and receive baptism [to be saved]. (p. 4)

To support this belief, he argued that:

⁶ It will not be our method to merely multiply texts from the ordinary magisterium to prove this point; such compilations already exist (e.g. Christopher Conlon's (2014) *Sources of Baptism of Blood and Desire*, or Fr. Anthony Cekada's (2000) *Baptism of Desire and Theological Principles*). Besides, we do not think that Reverend Crawford nor those who disagree with us *deny* that it is taught by the ordinary magisterium, rather they deny that it being taught by the ordinary magisterium *has any significance*.

Council of Trent taught that one could receive the grace of *justification before* receiving the sacrament of baptism.

[Trent] then states that one still needs Baptism for *salvation*. (p. 5, *emphasis* retained)

But he no longer believes that justification can be had prior to Baptism. In his (2018) Untitled Booklet, he argues instead that:

You cannot first receive justification without the Sacrament of Baptism. No one is first justified without Faith, Hope, and Charity, and no one receives Faith, Hope, and Charity without the Sacrament of Baptism. (p. 14)

He continually repeats that one cannot be justified without water baptism throughout his Untitled Booklet.

We think that if a man comes to the conclusion that he has believed wrongly, he should abandon what is wrong and cling to what is true. So in principle, we certainly don't object to the mere fact that Reverend Crawford has changed his argument. But we do object to him writing his Untitled Booklet as though the ideas contained in it were what he believed all along. Especially since many of the questions put to him by Bishop Pivarunas directly engaged his *prior* argument that dying justified was not enough to be saved (Appendix A, Q's 5, 6, 8, & 11). Given the public nature of the discussion, it would have been more fitting for Crawford to acknowledge that his opinion had changed.

Not only does Reverend Crawford not acknowledge this change of position, he opts for an impatient tone when replying to questions aimed at challenging his *previous* views (Q's. 6, 8, & 11 Appendix A). He uses expressions like "*Once again*, you cannot first be justified without having received the sacrament of Baptism," and "*For the third time*, we cannot receive God's life in our soul without having first received the sacrament of baptism," and finally "There is no need to *continue* and distinguish between justification and salvation" (pp. 17, 19, & 22, *emphases* added). But the only reason those distinctions were made by Bishop Pivarunas was because *Crawford* introduced them when writing his 2017 replies. So we don't think it's particularly just for Reverend Crawford to act as though his "real" argument has gone ignored or talked over—his argument against baptism of desire in the Untitled Booklet is *new*.

Of course, these observations of ours do not bear on the actual merits of his argument. But since we are entering into the sphere of the discussion, we would like to communicate what we believe is a better standard of decorum.

To bring this introduction to a close and recap Crawford's views: his previous contention was that Trent taught baptism of desire justified, but that one who died justified without water baptism would still be reprobate. His reading of Trent has changed, and his current position is that justification consists in faith, hope, and charity—which can *only* be received by water baptism. Justification, therefore, is something that may *only and exclusively* be enjoyed by those who have received water baptism. Only those who received water baptism and persevered in the state of justification it (and *only it*) provides—will be saved.

On the Necessity of Faith, Hope, and Charity

We absolutely agree that faith, hope, and charity—the possession of all three being no different than the existence of God's life in a person's soul, i.e., sanctifying grace—are absolutely, unequivocally, and unexceptionally necessary for salvation. However, these three most certainly *can* be had prior to baptism.

Faith (and Hope and Charity) does not only Begin with Baptism

The development of all theological virtue begins with the virtue of faith, which lends to and is the prerequisite for hope and charity. Charity *in particular* is considered the greatest of all theological virtues, because only through charity do faith or hope mean anything to God. As Saint Paul wrote, “If I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2) and Saint James “For even as the body without the spirit is dead; so also faith without works is dead” (James 2:26). Fr. Flynn (1948) explains it well:

Charity is the “form” of all virtues. That means that no virtue has its full perfection as a supernatural virtue unless it is, by association with charity, directed to the last end... faith and hope can be present without charity; but then we speak of them as “dead.” (cited in Smith, Vol. I, p. 639)

While we say that charity is “the greatest” of all virtues, it's not the *first* of the virtues. St. Thomas Aquinas (~1265) argued that

“faith, by its very nature, *precedes* all other virtues” because faith is of the intellect, and charity (which pertains to the will) obviously cannot animate faith unless it is known. (ST II, II, Q. 4, a. 7). Put another way by Fr. Otten (1918):

Faith alone does not justify, but it is the indispensable beginning, basis, and root of justification. If not accompanied by hope and charity, it is profitless and dead (p. 471).

To be sure, we could indefinitely multiply authors who teach this. It is as certain as any Catholic teaching, and was explicated from the very beginning of Catholic belief. All three virtues are required for salvation; charity is the greatest of these, but faith is the first of these.

So if charity is the greatest of all virtues and we cannot have it without faith, the question naturally arises: “how do we ‘get’ faith?” The Council of Trent tells us:

Now they are disposed to [justification] when aroused and aided by divine grace, *receiving faith by hearing*, they are freely moved toward God, believing that to be true which has been divinely revealed and promised. (Denz. 798, *emphasis added*)

Note the context: Trent is describing the *Catechumen’s* faith. Trent footnotes Romans 10:17 on this point, which is where St. Paul says “Faith then cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ.” We invite the reader to consult the entire chapter of St. Paul’s epistle—there is not a single mention of nor reference to baptism. Faith comes from *hearing*, not just from baptism.

Supernatural and Natural Faith

Reverend Crawford does attempt to explain what “faith by hearing” refers to. He argues that the faith received by hearing is merely a *natural* faith (p. 14). We can’t imagine where he gets that idea. As we just saw, Trent itself tells us that this faith includes “believing that to be true which has been divinely revealed and promised” (Denz. 798). All you need to do is *finish reading the sentence* and any question about the type of faith Trent is discussing will be resolved. And in case any doubts *still* linger, we can compare Trent’s description of the catechumens’ faith to Vatican I’s definition of supernatural faith:

Trent’s Description of a Catechumen’s Faith	Vatican I’s definition of Supernatural Faith
Now they are disposed to that justice when, aroused and assisted by divine grace, receiving faith "by hearing" [Rom. 10:17], they are freely moved toward God, believing that to be true which has been divinely revealed and promised (Denz. 798).	[Faith] is a supernatural virtue by which we, with the aid and inspiration of the grace of God, believe that the things revealed by Him are true (Denz. 1789).

Trent says that the faith of the catechumens happens *when they are aroused and assisted by divine Grace* and when they believe that to be true *which has been divinely revealed by God*. Even without comparing this description to Vatican I (and finding the two to be virtually identical), it is self-evidently **not** describing merely natural faith. Only by changing the very *definition* of faith can such an idea be maintained.⁷

The full Tridentine teaching presents a lucid picture of how justification *can* occur in the catechumen before receiving baptism. The Council of Trent taught that faith is when man believes “that to be true which has been divinely revealed and promised”, and from which faith comes a realization of one’s sinfulness and the virtue of *hope*, “trusting that God will be merciful to them for the sake of Christ,” and such hope lends to *charity*, as the sinner begins:

⁷ Furthermore, remember that faith is distinguished by its object (i.e., *by the thing it’s directed toward* or “placed in”). To quote one of any number of explanations, Wilhelm and Scannell (1909) explain that “[Theological faith] is also termed Divine Faith, in opposition to human faith—that is, faith founded on the authority of man; [and it is also called] Supernatural Faith, because it leads to supernatural salvation and has God for its author and Generator” (p. 115). So, faith *in* something supernatural is, by definition, *supernatural* faith—we suspect that most of our readers already know this, even if not in these terms. When we hear that someone has “faith” in their favorite athlete, sports team, company, parent, etc. we know that they’re talking about a natural faith because the thing faith is placed *in* is natural; on the other hand and when faith is discussed in relation to *God* or *revelation* (as it is at Trent in reference to the catechumen), we know that what’s being discussed is supernatural faith because faith is being placed *in* something supernatural.

To love [H]im as the source of all justice and [the sinner is] therefore moved against sin... by that repentance which must be performed before baptism; and finally when they *resolve* to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God (Denz. 798 *emphasis added*). Faith comes from hearing, then hope, and finally charity, culminating in a *resolve* for baptism. In this way all three virtues may be received prior to actual baptism.

The “Sacrament of Faith”

Reverend Crawford also argues that catechumens cannot be justified prior to baptism because Trent taught that:

The instrumental cause [of justification] is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which no one is ever justified. (Denz. 799).

Reverend Crawford takes this to mean that no one has ever been justified without *baptism*. Protestant cleric Charles McIlvaine read it the same way and Bishop Kenrick (1841) offered the following rebuttal which we will adopt as our own:

Were the decrees of the Council before him when he made this quotation, it would be impossible to excuse him from the disgrace of having mutilated and corrupted the text, to suit his purpose: but of this I willingly acquit him, being persuaded that he took the quotation at second hand. The text runs thus: "Instrumental item, sacramentum baptismi, quod est sacramentum fidei sine qua nulli unquam contigit justificatio." "The sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which (faith) no one ever was justified, is the instrumental cause." The necessity of faith in adults is declared, in conformity with the teaching of the Apostle, that "without faith it is impossible to please God." No mention whatsoever of the necessity of Baptism is made in this passage; and yet Bishop M'Ilvaine makes it the foundation of an argument to which he frequently reverts! (pp. 132-33)

We're sure that Reverend Crawford would be the first to point out that there is only *one* baptism and there are only *seven* sacraments, so the expression "sacrament of faith" isn't *literally* baptism. It is rich, theological language meant to indicate baptism's *effects*, especially faith. As bishop Kenrick explained to

the protestant minister, it is *faith* (rather than baptism) without which no man was ever justified.

So why is baptism called “the sacrament of faith” if faith (and even hope and charity) may be acquired prior to it? The Catechism of Trent explains that

The holy Fathers designate [baptism] also by other names. St. Augustine informs us that it was sometimes called the Sacrament of Faith because by receiving it we profess our faith in all the doctrines of Christianity (p. 110).

Saint Thomas likewise says it is called so because it is a type of profession of faith (ST III, Q. 66, a. 1). Nowhere in the Council, its catechism, nor in any other author—except Reverend Crawford—is it contended that baptism is called “the sacrament of faith” because it is the only way by which one can first receive faith.

Does Sin Remain?

We might anticipate a rebuttal along these lines: that while faith, hope, and charity may be present in the catechumen, the catechumen is still with original sin, and as all know (and we of course agree), all who die with original sin on their souls are damned. Therefore, while the catechumen may have the three theological virtues, the catechumen is still not *justified* until their sins are remitted in baptism.

But like all evils, original sin is the *absence* of a thing, not a thing unto itself. As Aquinas said, “Privation of original justice is original sin” since in original sin

The gift of original justice is taken away entirely; and privations that remove something entirely, such as death and darkness, cannot be more or less. (ST I, II, Q. 82, aa. 4-5)

This notion of sin as a *lack*, or a *privation*, is echoed from “bottom to top” in the Church’s teaching, as we see it also in Ott’s (1955) popular manual: “In each act of human generation is communicated a condition deprived of grace” (§22, 2, p. 111). And Dr. Ott is merely repeating *Trent*’s solemn affirmation of Aquinas’s teaching:

If anyone asserts that...the sanctity and justice, received [by Adam] from God, which he lost... has transfused only death "and the punishments of the body into the whole human

race, but not sin also, *which is the death of the soul*," let him be anathema. (Denz. 789)

Original sin is defined as the death of the soul, and the death of the soul is the *absence* of God's life in it. Original sin consists formally in a *lack* of grace and virtue—not a positive "presence" of sin.

That being the case, when we speak of original sin being *removed*, we are not speaking as if we are removing something that is "in our way"—the removal of original sin is not like moving a heap of rubble blocking a door way, instead it is like removing darkness in a room by hitting the light switch. *Nothing else* is required for the "removal" of a privation other than the introduction of that which was lacking. So if someone *has* the three theological virtues (which is just another way of saying that someone is *in the state of sanctifying grace*⁸), then *nothing else needs to be done* to remove original sin.

This is a truth also reflected by Pope St. Pius V's (1567) condemnations of Michael du Bay. These condemnations were issued less than five years after the conclusion of Trent. Among them included this condemned teaching:

[Condemned Proposition of Michael du Bay, no. 31] Perfect and sincere charity, which is from a "pure heart and good conscience and a faith not feigned" [1 Tim. 1:5], can be in catechumens as well as in penitents without the remission of sins⁹. (Denz. 1031)

There is a plain *incompatibility* between the theological virtues and sin. Someone who has perfect charity (which by definition includes supernatural faith and hope) is, *by definition*, not in sin. So when Crawford argues absolutely that:

⁸ While we can distinguish between the three theological virtues and sanctifying grace, the virtues and sanctifying grace are not *separable*; Trent itself clarifies this, and since Trent, theologians have sometimes called the three theological virtues "the concomitants of sanctifying grace" as a way to describe how they invariably follow from it (Pohle 1909, Sec 8; Pohle 1917, pp. 362-66; cf. Denz. 800).

⁹ This is not the first time Pope St. Pius V's condemnations have been presented to Reverend Crawford; Bishop Pivarunas (Appendix A, Q5) asked him to explain how his doctrine can be squared with Pius V's teaching but in his Untitled Booklet Reverend Crawford omitted the quotes from his transcription and did not address the question (2018, p. 14).

Without the sacrament of baptism original sin cannot be removed and we cannot initially have remission of sins or sanctifying grace (p. 17),
We can summarily dismiss him.

“Infused Virtues”

One might also wonder why baptism would bother *infusing* these theological virtues if they can be possessed by the catechumen prior to his actual baptism. The answer consists in remembering that grace and the theological virtues are not static. While a man may be said to either have or not have them, it would be untrue to say that all men who have them have them in the same “amount.” Allow us to quote Trent at length:

Having, therefore, been thus justified and having been made the "friends of God" and "his domestics" [John 15:15; Eph. 2:19], "advancing from virtue to virtue" [Ps. 83:8], "they are renewed" (as the Apostle says) "from day to day" [2 Cor. 4:16], that is, by mortifying the members of their flesh [Col. 3:5], and by "presenting them as instruments of justice" [Rom. 6:13, 19], unto sanctification through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church; in this justice received through the grace of Christ "faith cooperating with good works" [Jas. 2:22], they increase and are further justified [can. 24 and 32], as it is written: "He that is just, let him be justified still" [Rev. 22:11], and again: "Be not afraid to be justified even to death" [Sirach. 18:22], and again: "You see, that by works a man is justified and not by faith only" [Jas. 2:24]. And this increase of justice Holy Church begs for, when she prays: "Give unto us, O Lord, *an increase of faith, hope and charity*" [13th Sun. after Pent.]. (Denz. 803).

Growing in faith, hope, and charity are a central and indispensable part of every-day, ordinary Catholic life. We pray three Hail Mary's for an increase of them at the beginning of every rosary. We recite acts of faith, hope, and charity every morning, asking God to help us grow in them. The Collects and other propers of the Mass, as the Council points out, often seek God's help through an increase of the same. This is a very rich and powerful teaching display from the Council which wonderfully describes the *continued* justification of man through the sublime mystery of God's grace and man's cooperation.

Several condemnations from Trent correspond with this teaching about *continuous* growth in the theological virtues (Denz. 834 & 842). These condemnations are all opposed to the Protestant error that “grace is grace”, condemning the idea that anyone who has it has no more or less, nor *could* have more or less, than anyone else who has it.

True enough, it makes no sense for baptism to infuse graces that might already have been possessed if we think of grace as *static* and *binary* like the Protestants do. But since we all *grow* in grace—according both to God’s mercy and our own works—it is only fitting that baptism, which initiates one as a member of the Church and entitles one to the ordinary means of sanctification (i.e., the sacraments), would infuse all three of the theological virtues.

Baptism as the “Cause” of Justification

A fair amount of argumentation was also made by Reverend Crawford in relation to baptism as the *cause* of justification (pp. 22-4). In these arguments it seems manifest that Crawford’s mistakes are driven by a general ignorance of scholastic philosophy¹⁰. This is the philosophy developed by St. Thomas Aquinas and adopted by the Church as her own. Pope St. Pius X (1914) described the utter incompetence that follows when this philosophy is disregarded:

The capital theses in the philosophy of St. Thomas are not to be placed in the category of opinions capable of being debated one way or another, but are to be considered as the foundations upon which the whole science of natural and divine things is based; if such principles are once removed or in any way impaired, it must necessarily follow that students of the sacred sciences *will ultimately fail to perceive so much as the meaning of the words* in which the dogmas of divine revelation are proposed by the magistracy of the Church. (*Doctoris Angelici*, §3, *emphasis added*)

And in no place is it clearer that Reverend Crawford’s arguments have failed to “perceive so much as the meaning of the words in

¹⁰ Other names for this system of thought include Scholasticism, Thomism, Scholastic Metaphysics, Aristotelian-Thomist Metaphysics, etc.

which the dogmas of divine revelation are proposed” than when he attempts to explain baptism as the “cause” of justification. If we wish to properly understand the sense of what’s happening in Trent, we must be sensitive to and appreciable of the fact that it is not using colloquial language but language proper to the scholastic lexicon, and words with precise meanings which presuppose a familiarity with this philosophical background. Trent’s application of the Four Causes to the Catholic doctrine of justification are as great an example of this philosophical tradition as any.

Reverend Crawford manages to initially quote Trent correctly when it calls baptism the *instrumental* cause of justification, but then he drops this very important adjective (“instrumental”) and goes on to simply speak of baptism as “the cause” of justification (pp. 22-24). One might even blush on his behalf as he challenges Bishop Pivarunas:

“FIRST, define *your* definition for the terms “cause” and “cannot be effected” (p. 22, **emphasis** and CAPS retained)

Such a statement betrays an obliviousness over the terms the Council is using. Trent ascribes *several* causes to justification, each derived from the Aristotelian-Thomist system of causality. The final cause (i.e., the purpose for which justification exists) is “the glory of God and of Christ and life eternal”, and the efficient cause (i.e., the person or agent who moves man toward justification) is “a truly and merciful God who gratuitously ‘washes and sanctifies’” (Denz. 799). Now, *instrumental* causes (which is what Trent calls baptism) are a sub-distinction among *efficient* causes. Since these are St. Thomas’s distinctions, it is only fitting to allow him to explain:

An efficient cause is twofold, principal and instrumental.

The principal cause works by the power of its form, to which form the effect is likened; just as fire by its own heat makes something hot. *In this way none but God can cause grace*: since grace is nothing else than a participated likeness of the Divine Nature... But the instrumental cause works *not* by the power of its form, *but only by the motion whereby it is moved by the principal agent* (ST, III, Q. 62, a. 1, **emphasis** added).

Aquinas then continues, applying this distinction to the communication of grace through the sacraments:

Christ delivered us from our sins *principally* through His Passion, not only by way of efficiency and merit, but also by way of satisfaction. Wherefore it is manifest that the sacraments of the Church derive their power *specially from Christ's Passion*, the virtue of which is in a manner *united to us by our receiving the sacraments*. (*ibid.*, a. 5, *emphasis added*)

From which he concludes:

As stated above (III:62:5), Baptism of Water has its efficacy from Christ's Passion, to which a man is conformed by Baptism, and also from the Holy Ghost, as first cause. Now although the effect depends on the first cause, the cause far surpasses the effect, *nor does it depend on it*.

Consequently, a man may, without Baptism of Water, receive the sacramental effect from Christ's Passion, in so far as he is conformed to Christ by suffering for Him...In like manner a man receives the effect of Baptism by the power of the Holy Ghost, not only without Baptism of Water, but also without Baptism of Blood: forasmuch as his heart is moved by the Holy Ghost to believe in and love God and to repent of his sins: wherefore this is also called Baptism of Repentance [i.e., of desire]...Thus, therefore, each of these other Baptisms is called Baptism, forasmuch as it takes the place of Baptism. (ST, III, Q. 66, a. 11, *emphasis added*).

So an instrumental cause is an *instrument* by which a cause is effected. And instruments, unlike principals (who/which are metaphysically *indispensable* for bringing about an effect), are *substitutable*. Baptism of Desire is not a sacrament, but it can and does *substitute* for baptism of water inasmuch as it consists in baptism's justifying effects of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Readers may understandably be frustrated by a philosophical foray into scholastic terminology. Let us recall a point then, which we're sure everyone knows, but which might have been forgotten. The Council of Trent, like all other ecumenical councils, had an audience of *bishops*. So it used language and terminology commensurate to the experience and knowledge of its audience. And it certainly did not pause at any point to explain its language to an audience for which the documents were never intended. When Trent concluded, the bishops disseminated a *catechism* and incorporated the Council's

teachings into other ordinary means of teaching. They did not return from Trent with copies of the original documents—precisely because the Council’s teachings *weren’t* worded in “plain language.” On the contrary, a proper understanding of some of these teachings *even in English* requires at the bare minimum, a familiarity with Aristotelian-Thomistic jargon. As we saw Dr. Ward say in the previous chapter, learning from the solemn texts alone is a fundamentally *intellectually advanced* strategy, the exact opposite of *simple*.

Desire=Intent?

Moving on from Trent’s revered scholasticism, our next consideration is over Reverend Crawford’s attempt to explain the meaning of the word “desire.” Since he no longer believes that baptism of desire justifies, he has to explain just exactly what the Council means when it taught that:

After the promulgation of the Gospel [Justification] cannot be effected except through the laver of regeneration, *or a desire for it*, as it is written: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" [John 3:5] (Denz. 796, *emphasis added*)

Crawford explains: “In other words, if an adult is baptized but does not desire to be baptized, then justification will not be effected in their soul” (p. 19). Now, it’s certainly true that if someone doesn’t *want* to be baptized (but *is* baptized anyways), the defect in their intention impedes the full effects of the sacrament (this is true of all sacraments). But this is not what the Council meant when it mentioned desire.

And Reverend Crawford should know that. In his 2017 Replies, he spent some time arguing that the Latin word Trent uses for desire is “voto,” which Crawford argued translated better to “vow” than “desire”. (2017 Replies, pp. 5ff). Since he has abandoned that position we’ll hardly engage his prior point, except to say that *voto* indicates desire in the relevant sense: i.e., a true and proper turning away from sin, motivated by perfect charity along with faith and hope—contrary to a simple *passing* “desire”, like one might have for ice-cream¹¹ or chicken wings. Now, if Trent

¹¹ Although pregnant women may indeed have a desire for ice cream in the *voto* sense

simply meant to say that baptism will not justify if it is received contrary to one's intention, then Trent would have used *intentionem* (rather than *voto*), just as it does everywhere else it discusses intention specifically. And Crawford knows the Latin, or at least he's acted like he did in the past, so he should know that.

Furthermore, Trent uses the word *voto* to teach that that sacramental confession at least in desire may restore a sinner who has fallen after baptism. This is the foundation of the doctrine of perfect contrition¹²:

[Restoration to justice after baptism includes] sacramental confession of those sins, at least in desire [*voto*]... [and] The eternal punishment... is remitted together with the guilt either by the sacrament or by the desire of the sacrament (Denz. 807; cf. Q's 3&4 Appendix A).

If *voto* means what Reverend Crawford thinks it means, then the "desire" for penance described by Trent means *actually going to confession while actually meaning* to go to confession. And that's just silly. So unless he is ready to abandon the doctrine of perfect contrition too, he'll have to admit that *voto* means more than merely receiving a sacrament willingly.

But our argument hardly depends on the original Latin. All of the received and approved translations of Trent render *voto* as the English word "desire" and we would contend that the Church's translations to the vernacular are perfectly safe. More to the point, Trent doesn't just obliquely mention a desire for baptism and then leave us on our own to guess what that means. It mentions that *desire* for baptism can justify, and then almost immediately ensues with a description of catechumens who are justified when they "*resolve* to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God" (Denz. 798). Even if we had no knowledge of the Latin at all, the context makes it abundantly clear what *desire* for baptism means.

¹² I.e., the teaching that if a Catholic in mortal sin makes a perfect act of charity he is restored to justice before receiving absolution in sacramental confession, and that were he to die before the opportunity to confess, he would be saved

It means perfect charity, which is what all Catholic Fathers, Doctors, and Theologians have always admitted justifies. To take one of the more notable examples, St. Alphonsus Liguori (1748):

Baptism of desire is perfect conversion to God by contrition or love of God above all things accompanied by an explicit or implicit desire for true Baptism of water, the place of which it takes as to the remission of guilt, but not as to the impression of the [baptismal] character or as to the removal of all debt of punishment. It is called "of wind" ["flaminis"] because it takes place by the impulse of the Holy Ghost who is called a wind ["flamen"]. Now it is de fide that men are also saved by Baptism of desire, by virtue of the Canon Apostolicam, "de presbytero non baptizato"¹³ and of the Council of Trent, session 6, Chapter 4 where it is said that no one can be saved "without the laver of regeneration or the desire for it. (trans. Daly, Bk. VI, §95).

Notice that St. Alphonsus, whose work Pope Gregory XVI (1839) declared could be read "*without the least fear of finding the smallest error*" (Bull of Canonization, cited in Liguori, 1854, p. 584, §7), justifies his explanation by citing the very passage of Trent under contention. Given that, and given all of our other considerations in this section, we can hardly find any reason why Reverend Crawford's contention that "desire=intent" should be taken seriously.

Catechumens and the Catholic Church

At this point, the only thing left to do is to consider the relationship between a justified catechumen and the Catholic Church. By this point we've already proved that catechumens *can* be justified. Are we to suppose that someone can be justified and *not* be in the Church? We would posit that at this point in the work, the question isn't "are catechumens in the Church?" but rather, "*how* are catechumens in the Church?" If justification consists in all that is necessary for salvation, and if being in the

¹³ Pope Innocent II's (~1140) "de presbytero non baptizato" (Denz. 388) teaches "on the authority of the Holy Fathers Augustine and Ambrose" that baptism of desire may save. It is sometimes implied by those who deny baptism of desire that this teaching of Pope Innocent's is of questionable legitimacy, or that Karl Rahner added it to Denzinger in the fifties. As we can see, it was known well to St. Alphonsus a hundred years before Denzinger existed. Moreover, it is found in Denzinger's very first (1854) edition as well as subsequent editions (e.g. 1910 11th ed.) which were never touched by Rahner.

Church is necessary for salvation, then justification can hardly be had *outside* the Church, can it?

Reverend Crawford's argument that Catechumens are outside the Church is based *primarily* on the fact that they are not baptized. He says that

the Council [of Trent] defined that no one can be justified without the sacrament of faith, which is the sacrament of baptism, because through baptism, supernatural faith, hope, and charity are infused into a soul, thereby making a soul justified and uniting it perfectly with Christ as a member of the Church. (p. 13)

As we've just seen, the Council does not at all teach that supernatural faith, hope, and charity are only had (or had first) with baptism. And Trent certainly doesn't teach that one becomes a member *because* of the three theological virtues, either.

Membership in the Catholic Church is a concept which has undergone considerable development and explication since St. Robert Bellarmine. A somewhat longstanding dispute between theologians regarding the conditions for membership was all but settled with Pope Pius XII's (1943) *Mystici Corporis Christi*:

Only those are to be numbered among the members of the Church who have received the laver of regeneration and profess the true faith, and have not, to their misfortune, separated themselves from the structure of the Body, or for very serious sins have not been excluded by lawful authority (Denz. 2286).

There are two positive conditions, and one negative: to be a member of the Church one must be baptized, one must profess the faith, and one must not be separated *from the structure of the body*. The longstanding dispute settled here was over whether or not the theological virtues were required for membership. In truth, the dispute was hardly all that contentious since Bellarmine's doctrine (which held that *profession* of faith, not interior/supernatural faith, was what counted for membership) had long since been the preferred explanation of ecclesiologists, and only a minority of theologians continued to insist that supernatural faith or any other virtue was required. Nevertheless, Pope Pius's enumeration of membership's conditions render it

clear that theological virtues are *not* among the conditions for membership.

Now, the pope does not go into great detail as to *why* one doesn't need supernatural faith to be a member of the Church, but we have answers—mainly from St. Robert Bellarmine, who explained that:

If those who lack internal faith are not, nor can be, in the Church, there will be no further question between us and the heretics on the visibility of the Church, hence, so many disputations of the most erudite men will be redundant, which to this point have been brought forth. All who have written to this point object to the Lutherans and Calvinists because they make the Church invisible. (p. 297).

St. Robert's annoyance is directed at other Catholic authors of the time who were arguing that supernatural faith was required for membership in the Catholic Church. His annoyance is owed to the fact that he and his companion counter-reformationists—Ss. Francis de Sales, Peter Canisius, Charles Borromeo, et al.—went to great lengths sparring with the protestants who all conditioned membership on some *invisible* thing or another (faith, justification, election, etc.), and the learned doctor rightly pointed out that a Church whose membership was conditioned on anything *invisible* (such as supernatural faith) was a *Church* that was invisible. Thus, St. Robert says that if we're going to make internal faith a condition for membership, there's no point in continuing to distinguish between us and the Protestants.

Membership Pertains to the External

As Bellarmine reasoned, if the Catholic Church was to be a visible institution, then membership in this institution could not be conditioned on anything *invisible*. So he concluded that

The form of the Church is not internal faith (unless we mean to have an invisible Church), but external faith, *i.e.* the confession of faith. (p. 300)

And of course this only makes perfect sense. So Bellarmine's conclusion—that since the Church is visible, membership must be a matter of *externals* rather than *internals*—became not just a standardized argument against the reformers, but also the boilerplate ecclesiological model for all theologians who came after him. And we can see Bellarmine's doctrine favored by Pope

Pius XII when he teaches that membership is conditioned on whether someone a) is baptized (a visible initiation), b) *professes* the faith (a visible habit), and c) hasn't been excluded from the "structure of the body" by heresy, schism, apostasy, or excommunication, all of which are visible, public facts.

Begging the reader's patience: this point—about membership and the visibility of the Church—is important not just to correct Reverend Crawford's mistakes on the conditions for membership, but to properly set the stage of what it *means* to be a member of the Catholic Church. Being a member is *not* synonymous with "being in" the Church; membership is a technical status which describes something *external*. The Church's doctrine is "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*" (EENS)—outside the Church, there is no salvation. Not, "outside Church membership there is no salvation."

The reader may be incredulous. After all, Reverend Crawford claims at the very beginning of his Untitled Booklet that "a person must be a *member* of the Catholic Church to be saved" (p. 1, *emphasis added*). He then gives eighteen quotes to prove the point. But only a third of these even *include* the word "member," and each of those only says that *baptism* is a requirement for membership, not that *membership* is a requirement for salvation. Of the remaining quotes he provides, none even *mention* membership at all. Reverend Crawford has clearly conflated "being a member of" with "being in" the Church¹⁴.

A Terminological (not Doctrinal) Dispute

So how is it that catechumens are in the Church? One way that some authors attempted to describe this was by appealing to "membership in/of the soul of the Church," while others contended that such an explanation was wholly unsatisfactory (e.g.

¹⁴ Crawford also bookends his Untitled Booklet with the assertion that one must be "marked as Catholic" to be saved (pp. 1, 3, 55, 56). We say "asserts" rather than "argues" because despite the frequency of the claim he never even attempts to develop an argument to prove it. Now, one might argue along with Mgr. Fenton (1950) that the indelible mark *is* necessary for membership, and that seems a decent argument, at least the way that Fenton makes it. But Crawford doesn't even try, and even if he did, he's focusing on the wrong thing. He's supposed to be proving is that *membership* is necessary for *salvation*.

Fenton¹⁵, 1944). Later, Fenton (1958) would argue that among the various known expressions, “member *in voto*” (i.e., member in desire) is the preferred expression for describing a catechumen’s relationship to the Church because “member *in voto*” was the expression used in Pope Pius XII’s *Suprema Haec* letter. Fr. Sebastiaan Tromp who drafted and ghost-wrote *Mystici Corporis Christi* draws our attention to the fact that this distinction is supported by the encyclical itself:

Take notice of the word *reapse* placed in the beginning of the paragraph [where the conditions for membership are defined]; this passage is concerned with those who pertain to the Church *really* [re]... [But paragraph 101 discusses] those who are joined to the Church only in desire [voto] and are indeed related to the Body of Christ [despite being] deprived of the many divine aids which are found only in the true Church (Cited in King 1959, pp. 254-55).

And we can hardly be surprised that *Mystici Corporis* identifies this distinction. It was a distinction made by Bellarmine, whose doctrine pervades Pope Pius XII’s encyclical. Bellarmine explained that:

It is said outside the Church no man is saved, and this ought to be understood on those who are neither *in fact* nor *in desire* within the Church, just as all the Theologians commonly teach on Baptism¹⁶ (p. 241, *emphasis added*).

¹⁵ Readers may be confused to hear that Fenton was an *opponent* of this theory since Reverend Crawford intimated in a 2017 public presentation that “Fenton’s theory” was a theory about catechumens belonging to the soul of the Church. And although he doesn’t mention Fenton specifically in his Untitled Booklet, Crawford does briefly claim that one cannot be “invisibly ‘attached’” to the soul of the Church (p. 24). Now, “The soul of the Church” was an expression Bellarmine used (and he attributed it to Saint Augustine). The Holy Ghost *is* the Soul of the Church (Pope Leo XIII, *Divinum Illud*) and to speak of “the soul of the Church” or even a certain relationship to the Church’s soul is not, of itself, problematic. What *is* problematic, as Fenton argued, is to speak of the soul of the Church *as a discrete and distinct society* of the justified, which is the implication when someone describes a “member of the soul of the Church.” That implication is simply false, since as Fenton put it “the men and women in whom the Holy Ghost dwells through sanctifying grace do not constitute any social organization by themselves in this world” (p. 52). Now, these considerations do not bear *directly* on the matter at hand, but are mentioned briefly as a way of introducing some context and background regarding the different uses and formulations of the expression “soul of the Church,” since Reverend Crawford’s oblique references to it are very superficial and suggest that he’s probably just repeating things he’s heard secondhand.

¹⁶ Notice that Bellarmine who is writing as a *contemporary* of the Council of Trent witnesses that baptism of desire is the universal teaching of the Church at that time

Surveying this material shows us that *whether or not* Catechumens can be in the Church is not something that has ever been disputed. This much is reflected over *centuries* of Catholic teaching. The only question legitimately debated was a very different one, and that's the question over how best to *describe* that Catechumens are in the Church.

In concluding our remarks on membership and catechumens, let's quickly return to the remarks with which we initiated this discussion. Unless one wishes to argue that justification occurs outside the Catholic Church—and we suspect that our interlocutors are in large part motivated to argue as they do precisely because they *deny* that justification can happen outside the Catholic Church—then it is only obvious that the justified Catechumen is indeed *in* the Church. The Council of Trent shows how faith, hope, and charity, the formal cause of which is sanctifying grace, may be acquired by the catechumen before Baptism. Are we to suppose, then, that sanctifying grace is something possessed by those who are *altogether outside the Church*? Certainly not. That the justified catechumen is in the Church is a direct logical consequence from the fact that such are *justified*.

Concluding Thoughts

With all the foregoing points in mind, we might anticipate a final desperate rebuttal that is a simple reduction to “but baptism is necessary for salvation.” This contention is of course the central proposition under consideration, with Reverend Crawford quoting Trent no less than six times when it says:

If anyone shall say that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation: let him be anathema. (Denz. 860; cited in Crawford pp. 4, 18, 28, 35, 42 & 49)

But Crawford doesn't take this canon as a conclusive and comprehensive display of the Church's teaching on baptism. He argues *not* directly from this canon, but by arguing that baptism is necessary *because* it is the only way to have faith, hope, and charity. Implicitly, he grants that the canon *does not* “speak for itself.” If it did, he wouldn't need to point us elsewhere to understand it.

Neither do we take the canon as the Church's complete teaching on baptism, obviously, because we figure that the degree to which baptism is necessary is elucidated not in the canon itself but in the contextual and extant teaching of the Church's *understanding* of the canon. That understanding includes the corpus of Trent's teaching which we've surveyed here, along with all of the ordinary teaching which ensued in the wake of the Council, and which consistently prevailed *since* the Council.

And we would be remiss not to point out that when Trent uses the exact same phrasing to teach:

If anyone denies that sacramental confession was either instituted by divine law or is necessary for salvation...let him be anathema (Denz. 916),

No one hesitates to seek information elsewhere to better understand the degree to which penance is necessary. So it should not be viewed as impious to ask how the Church *understands* "necessary"¹⁷.

We think that to a great extent, the material in this chapter has addressed this question. Baptism is the *instrumental* cause of salvation, it is compulsory for all men after the promulgation of the Gospel by Divine Precept as a necessity of means to justification. But as an *instrumental* cause, rather than principal efficient cause, its *effects*—viz., supernatural faith, hope, and charity—may be substituted for. And besides the wealth of ordinary teaching we've provided to explain the possibility of justification prior to baptism, the Council of Trent *itself* describes the same.

¹⁷ Note that the Council of Trent says that the effects of baptism and penance may both be supplied by *voto* (desire) (Denz. 796 & 807), and then later teaches that penance "is necessary for the salvation of those who have fallen after baptism, *as baptism itself is for those as yet not generated*" (Denz. 895 *emphasis added*). So if both penance and baptism are necessary in the same way with respect to those for whom reception is applicable, and if both sacraments may have their effects communicated by *voto* (desire), it follows that just as one may be restored to justice *before* sacramental absolution through *voto*, so too may one be restored to justice *before* sacramental baptism through *voto*. We refer readers to Appendix A, Q's 3-4 where Bishop Pivarunas pointed this out to Reverend Crawford. Crawford did not answer the question, he merely argued that the dignity of these sacraments differs and that the repentance of penitents and catechumens are not the same (pp. 12-13). Both of these claims, though true, are completely irrelevant to the question of each sacrament's *necessity*.

Summary

- We argued that the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, are necessary for justification and salvation in the most absolute and unconditional sense.
- We showed that Trent itself, contrary to Reverend Crawford's contention, teaches that supernatural faith does *not* only start at baptism, and that hope and charity may also be acquired prior to it.
- Against Crawford's argument that Trent ascribes to the catechumen only *natural* faith received by hearing, we pointed out that not only does Trent richly describe the faith of the Catechumen as being a *grace* which is ordered toward believing *Divine Revelation*, but we also compared this description to Vatican I's definition of supernatural faith and saw that they are virtually identical.
- We showed that baptism is called "the sacrament of faith" because it is a *profession* of faith, not because it is the only way to receive faith.
- We also discussed the nature of sin as a privation of grace, and how, *nothing else is needed to remove a privation* except the introduction of what was lacking (i.e., grace and the supernatural virtues).
- We explained that since grace is not static but is something that we *grow* in, baptism's "infusion" of the three theological virtues is not redundant.
- We drew attention to Reverend Crawford's lack of attention to the scholastic language used by Trent, and showed that baptism as the *instrumental* cause of justification is precisely *why* (metaphysically speaking) its effects can be substituted for.
- We argued that when Trent says *voto* may justify, the word *voto* means much more than (as Crawford contended) "actually receiving a sacrament while intending to actually receive a sacrament." Crawford is aware of the meaning of this word and why he would attempt to construct such a silly argument is beyond us; in fact, if he carries this argument out to its logical conclusion, he will have to abandon the doctrine of perfect contrition as well. Moreover, we showed that almost as soon as Trent teaches that a *desire* for baptism may justify, it moves on to

describe that desire consisting in a *resolve* for baptism and a turning away from one's old life toward the commandments of God. So even without any knowledge of Latin, the context makes it very clear what this justifying desire is.

- In this chapter we also devoted some space to discussing Reverend Crawford's claims that catechumens are outside the Church. We showed that Reverend Crawford has a faulty understanding of the requirements for membership, and that he conditions membership on something invisible (supernatural virtue).
- We showed that Pope Pius XII, following Bellarmine, puts only external conditions on membership and that's *because* membership is a technical status pertaining to *externals*; to "be a member" in that sense is not an exclusive synonym for "being in" the Catholic Church.
- Supernatural virtues, which a justified catechumen has, *do* establish a true and meaningful union with Christ and His Church, but it is not the external bond of membership.
- There was certainly a *terminological* dispute over the best way to explain in operational and ontological detail just *how exactly* the Catechumen enjoys this union, a dispute which was more or less settled (at least in large part) with the Holy Office's clear preference of the expression "member *in voto*", an expression that can be traced back to St. Robert Bellarmine at least.
- But there was never a *doctrinal* dispute (except for the one Reverend Crawford has attempted to conjure up) over *whether or not* justified catechumens are in the Church. Justification, which is the state of being in sanctifying grace and being an heir to Heaven, most certainly *does not happen outside* Christ's Church and as such, a justified catechumen is *by definition* in the Church.

Chapter Three: On Baptism of Desire, Universal Salvation, and Vatican II

Introduction

Although Reverend Crawford does not expound in great detail on this point, it is something of a latent argument of his, and is a common argument in similar literature, that baptism of desire “leads to,” “paves the way for,” or in some other way is ultimately and logically tantamount to universal salvation. In this way it is often argued that baptism of desire is the principal error of Vatican II, at least in the sense that if we admit to baptism of desire “the floodgates are open” to all kinds of ecclesiological and soteriological¹⁸ error.

This brief chapter will be something of a reprieve following the last chapter. In this chapter we’ll quickly provide a few arguments to show how universal salvation doesn’t follow from baptism of desire. We’ll show that one must learn from heretics in order to even *make* such an argument, and we’ll conclude by tying these considerations back to the importance of the ordinary magisterium.

The Logical Problem

Reverend Crawford cites Vatican II’s *Lumen Gentium* as footnoting Pope Pius XII’s *Suprema Haec* letter to support its teaching that “the plan of salvation” also includes Muslims (pp. 2-3). The implication being that we (generally, as Catholics holding fast to Tradition) reject Vatican II because it teaches universal salvation, but Vatican II *got its ideas* from baptism of desire, therefore, baptism of desire is the “root problem.” Without baptism of desire, there’s no universal salvation (so goes the argument).

It should be abundantly clear that what we have argued, and the material we have used to support our arguments, does not resemble anything remotely *near* universal salvation. Grace, faith, hope, and charity are relentlessly required for a soul to be justified. This doctrine is found everywhere and is inescapable from the solemn to the ordinary texts. Baptism of desire is *premised* on this understanding, so any later conclusion which *abandons* that

¹⁸ Soteriology is the theology of salvation.

premise is clearly **not** a logical consequence of baptism of desire. If universal salvation abandons the necessity of faith, hope, and charity for salvation then we know *by that fact alone* that baptism of desire does not and *could not* lead to it. So, in the strict order of logic it is simply untrue that baptism of desire is the same thing as, or leads to, universal salvation.

Ignoring Distinctions

A slightly revised version of the same argument advances a case that looks something like this: baptism of desire represented the first relaxation or watering-down of the Church's doctrine on salvation; whether an error in its own right or not, it certainly relaxed Churchmen's attitudes about salvation and disposed them to accepting, believing in, and teaching universal salvation.

For starters, to view baptism of desire or membership *in voto* as diluted or otherwise relaxed versions of Catholic teaching is to ignore everything that's been said up to this point. To illustrate this, consider how the great American convert and *tenacious* defender of EENS, Orestes Brownson (1847), defends the justified catechumen:

The apparent exception [to EENS] alleged turns out, therefore, to be no real exception at all; for the persons excepted are still members of the body of the Church in effect¹⁹, as the authorities referred to [Brownson has just finished citing Bellarmine and some others to prove that catechumens are in the Church] have labored to prove. They [i.e., justified catechumens] are persons who have renounced their infidel and heretical societies, and have found and explicitly recognized the [Catholic] Church... Their faith is the Catholic faith; the unity they will is Catholic unity; the Church at whose door they knock is the Catholic Church; the sacrament they solicit, they solicit from the hands of her legitimate priests. (p. 240)

¹⁹ We might remind the reader of the brief discussion regarding terminological disputes over how best to describe the justified non-baptized; Brownson uses "member in effect." He wrote a hundred years prior to the relative standardization of the term "member in *voto*," so he can of course be excused for what might not be the best term to use—besides, it's clear enough by his further explanation what he *means* by this term.

Brownson hits on all the key points, and one would be hard pressed to find *any* author in Church history (and we do mean *any*) who is as committed and unrelenting in preaching that there is no salvation outside the Church. The point being that only if one is to ignore all of the distinctions made up to this point—not distinctions invented by “mere men” but distinctions used at the Council of Trent, distinctions found in St. Alphonsus and decreed with papal authority to be free from even the *slightest* error, distinctions Bellarmine tells us are the *universal* teaching of the theologians—and butt our heads against the wall does the idea of baptism of desire pose any threat of “watering down” Catholic teaching.

And even *if* we were to grant that baptism of desire “relaxed” Churchmen’s vigilance against errors in soteriology, all that shows is the *importance* of properly understanding baptism of desire. Arius’s corruption of the truth that Christ had a human nature was not a proof of Christ’s humanity being an error, nor was the Protestant error of justification by faith alone a proof that faith doesn’t play a role in the justification process. If someone *errs* then the remedy is not *throwing away doctrine* but improving one’s understanding of it!

But it isn’t even true that baptism of desire created some disposition for accepting universal salvation. As we’ve just seen in the last chapter, baptism of desire is something that was universally taught *at the very least* since Trent, per Bellarmine’s testimony²⁰. The Church maintained baptism of desire for hundreds of— if not *more than a thousand*— years without the “threat” of universal salvation looming over the doctrine. That universal salvation did not gain any traction in all of this time tells us that some other belief or system—probably *modernism*, which came about *far* more proximate to universal salvation than baptism of desire did—is responsible for universal salvation.

²⁰ In truth, one could make a very good argument for its universality being found *much* earlier, at least with St. Thomas or even the Patristic age, but pinpointing the exact moment the teaching achieved universal status is not necessary; as we mentioned in Chapter One, the Church cannot err universally even for a *moment*, so if something is universally held *ever*, such is proof enough that it is Catholic teaching.

Heretics are not Credible Sources for the True Sense of Doctrine

Thirdly, finally, and probably most importantly, the argument that Baptism of Desire “leads” to or “paves” the way for Universal Salvation and Vatican II is proved false because it gives too much credit to heretics. Need we point out that heretics are not credible? If we want to know the true meaning or implication of Catholic teaching, a heretic is quite truly the last person on earth that we go to.

The rebuttal may be anticipated: “But the heretics used baptism of desire to justify universal salvation!” Well, yes. That’s how heresy “works.” Few and far between are the heretics who supported their heretical notions *without* some reference to legitimate Catholic teaching. Luther argued for faith alone *by pointing to St. Paul and Scripture*. Calvin argued for double-predestination *by pointing to St. Augustine*. The Fraticelli condemned the Church’s possessions *by pointing to Saint Francis*. And so on. It is crucial to the success of any heresiarch that they not break *completely* with the Christian tradition (which is why we call them *heretics* and not *apostates*) because if they do, then they lose the support of all those they are trying to convince. Heretics always, almost by categorical definition, attempt to prove their errors by pointing to Catholic doctrine. So of course it comes as no surprise that universal salvationists would claim that they’re just believing in baptism of desire.

And if we *take the word of the heretic* that his understanding of some doctrine is the true one, then we make heretics our rule of faith! And this is exactly what we must do if we wish to argue that Baptism of Desire is wrong because heretics use it to support universal salvation. We must throw out what *the Church* understands the doctrine to mean—as explained by St. Thomas, confirmed by Trent, proliferated by Bellarmine, Liguori, and the Church’s ordinary magisterium— and instead figure that Rahner et al. are the ones who *truly* understand it. Need we even say that such a method is truly insane?

Looking at Church history, the Church has *never* conceded that one of her teachings “paved the way” for heresy. Did the doctrine of Christ having a human nature “pave the way” for

Arianism? Surely, Arius would never have gotten it into his head that there's a contradiction between someone being God *and* man if the Church hadn't first insisted that Jesus Christ was both divine *and* human. Did the Church "de-emphasize" Christ's human nature at Nicaea? Push it under the rug because it was a doctrine that clergy and faithful twisted to mean something she never intended it to mean?

Of course, we know that at Nicaea the Church re-asserted what she already taught at an ordinary level: Jesus Christ is God *and* man. She didn't grant to Arius that there was any contradiction in this proposition and she didn't get bullied by rhetoric into thinking that *her immaculate doctrine* paved the way for error. She asserted that doctrine is to be understood *the way she understands it*—not differently in any direction. But only and exactly how she understands it.

Concluding Thoughts

As we wrap up this chapter, it seems only fitting to tie our most recent considerations about Arianism back to what was established in Chapter One, viz., the force and infallible nature of the Church's ordinary magisterium. If we lived during Arius's time, by what principle in Reverend Crawford's proposed rule of faith would we say that it was *Arius* who erred? We cannot say that Arius contradicted solemnly defined teaching, since there *wasn't any*. We cannot point to the scriptures, since they were not yet solemnly defined either. The *only* reference point by which to compare Arius's doctrine to the doctrine of the Catholic Church was by comparing it to the ordinary magisterium. But since the ordinary magisterium (in Reverend Crawford's view) is only infallible when it agrees with something that's already solemnly defined, the ordinary magisterium might've been *wrong* about who Jesus Christ was. Could it be that *Arius* was right all along? That he was the proto-Feeney, standing up against the teachings of "mere men" in a righteous attempt to save the Godhead from being watered down with a human nature? That Nicaea was really a robber council, that Ss. Athanasius, Liberius, Felix, Nicholas, and all the rest were the first modernists, establishing an anti-Church in nascent Christianity to diabolically disorient and deceive the

faithful for as long as possible, encouraging them to worship not God but a *man*?

Of course we don't expect the reader to take this Dan Brown-esque consideration seriously. *But why not?* Remember that a rule of faith isn't a rule *at all* if it isn't applied consistently. What makes the Church's universal ordinary teaching "count" in the Arian crisis? From our perspective, it's not difficult at all to show why Arius was wrong. He came along three hundred years after the fact, while everyone was peacefully and universally teaching and believing that Jesus Christ was God and man, and he dissented from that ordinary teaching. This argument isn't available to Reverend Crawford. So if he lived in 300 AD, how would *he* know that Jesus Christ has a Divine nature?

Summary

- In this chapter we have addressed the claim that baptism of desire is controvertible with universal salvation. We've shown that baptism of desire is premised in a belief that faith, hope, and charity are required for justification, so if universal salvation denies those conditions, it clearly does *not* logically come from baptism of desire—only by crudely ignoring all of the distinctions and arguments put forth thus far can any such conflation be made.
- We've also argued that since baptism of desire was universally and explicitly taught *for at least* five hundred years (i.e., since the Council of Trent) without universal salvation ever coinciding with it, it's not true to argue that baptism of desire "relaxed" or otherwise disposed the Church to accepting universal salvation.
- We also exposed that one can only mount the "paved the way" argument if one ignores what the Church has taught on the issue and instead supposes that the heretics twisting the doctrine are the ones who got it right—which is truly absurd.
- We have also considered that if one were to maintain the rebutted logics in this chapter, one could legitimately

conclude that Arianism²¹ was legitimately borne out of the doctrine of Christ being God and man. We also pointed out, as a way of returning back to the central point pervading our work, that if we used Reverend Crawford's rule of faith during the Arian crisis we could legitimately conclude that it was *Arius* who was right all along.

²¹ In keeping with this Arian theme, we know that sometimes the Arian crisis is propped up as a precedent for the ordinary magisterium being capable of error, with many traditional Catholics being under the impression that during the Arian crisis, most of the world's bishops lost the faith. It is probably relevant here to, via footnote, quickly correct this common but erroneous "myth" that circulates among traditional Catholics. Factually, this idea is simply incorrect. The myth is likely borne out of St. Jerome's statement that (is usually presented as being something like) "the whole world groaned and awoke to find itself Arian," and/or possibly the Emperor Constantine's letter to Liberius, where he asked who Liberius was to stand up for Athanasius "against the world." Cardinal Newman, Anglican convert and noted Church historian argued (even when Anglican) that the majority of bishops retained the Catholic faith throughout the entirety of the Arian conflict, although he does criticize them for not being more *responsive* to Arianism (cited in Geissler, 2012, p. 5). Fr. Berry in *The Church of Christ* (1927) denies the claim that Arians were ever a majority, citing St. Athanasius' letter to the Emperor where in Saint Athanasius (who would know better than *anyone* regarding the scope of Arianism) testifies to the fidelity of the vast majority of prelates (pp. 169-70). Saint Alphonsus Liguori's *History of Heresies* (1772) provides a comprehensive history of Arianism wherein he also maintains that Catholic bishops remained the very clear majority during this period (pp. 55-83, esp. §§44-9). Fr. Hunter's *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology* (1898) explains that St. Jerome's quote was a rhetorical device, and perhaps a humorous exaggeration of the Council of Rimini, a non-sanctioned council where many bishops were coaxed into signing a semi-Arian creed (p. 303). Fr. Laux's (1931) popular *Church History* says the same (p. 119). At any rate, the commonly circulated claim among traditionalists that the Arian period was a period where *most* or even *practically all* Catholic bishops were in fact *Arian* bishops is completely unsupported by the Church's historians—they say the *opposite*. Indeed, we might simply ask that if most bishops were Arian, why was Arianism met with such decisive resistance at Nicaea?

Chapter Four: On Canon Law, the Fathers, and the Doctors

Introduction

Chapter Two contains the bulk of our arguments addressing Reverend Crawford's beliefs about baptism, justification, membership, and salvation. In the present chapter we would like to respond to some related mistakes he makes regarding the infallibility of canon law, and address some of the claims he has made to diminish the authority of the fathers and doctors of the Church. Our response will highlight further doctrinal errors of his, and in the process we will begin to see that baptism of desire denial, at least for Crawford, can only be maintained by distorting if not ruining the Church's laws, history, and Fathers.

Canon Law

Several questions responded to by Reverend Crawford deal with Canon law (Appendix A, Q's 7-12). Canon law is the *Church's* law, and represents her effort to codify and legislate the divine law for human praxis. Broadly speaking, it includes things like liturgical laws, disciplinary laws, marriage laws, penal laws and processes, and so forth. The Church's laws contribute to the debate over baptism of desire, because several canons mention it. For instance, Canon 737 §1 explicitly teaches baptism of desire:

Baptism, the door to and foundation of the sacraments, necessary for the salvation of all persons *in fact or at least in desire*, is not validly conferred except through a washing with true, natural water accompanied by the prescribed verbal formula (trans. Appendix A, *emphasis added*).²²

As an extension of canon 737's understanding of baptism's necessity, Canon 1239 §2 teaches that:

Catechumens who through no fault of their own die without baptism, are to be counted as baptized [for purposes of Christian burial] (trans. Appendix A).²³

Clearly, canon law teaches the possibility of a salvific baptism of desire. This alone should end the debate if canon law is infallible.

²² In Latin: "Baptismus, Sacramentorum ianua ac fundamentum, omnibus in re vel saltem in voto necessariis ad salutem, valide non confertur, nisi per ablutionem aquae verae et naturalis cum praescripta verborum forma" (Gasparri, 1918, p. 212).

²³ In Latin: "Catechumeni qui nulla sua culpa sine baptismi moriantur, baptizatis accensendi sunt" (Gasparri, 1918, p. 354).

When asked if Canon Law was infallible, Reverend Crawford replied in the negative (2017, pp. 5-7; 2018, pp. 18-21). He has given several reasons for this belief. In his 2017 replies he gave two arguments: he argued that canon law is fallible because it can be changed, and that canon law is fallible because it is not universal. In his 2018 Untitled Booklet, he argued that only the footnotes are infallible. We will address all of these arguments.

Infallibility and Immutability

It is true that canon law can be changed, which means that it isn't *immutable*, but that hardly means that it isn't *infallible*. If we recall, infallibility means a providential protection from *even the possibility of error*. This is not the same thing as immutable, which means unchangeable. When we speak of the infallibility of *laws*, we speak of something that, of its very nature, is tied to temporal space and therefore influenced by extrinsic factors. In other words, infallibility of the Church's laws means that there can never be anything *intrinsically* wrong with them, even though certain extrinsic factors or events may arise and make some law or another, though infallible, simply not as applicable or prudential as it was when it was first promulgated. And as a result, the legislator may change, amend, or even abolish the law.

There are many examples of such changes throughout history. The Council of Trent's (Session 24) decree *Tametsi* was abolished and replaced by Pope St. Pius X's universal decree *Ne Temere*, which made some adjustments to the requirements for a valid and lawful marriage. Likewise Pope St. Pius X's *Divino Afflatu* dramatically reformed the Roman Breviary. Or what better example *than the Code of Canon Law itself*, which abolished *all* legislation that came before it, except and unless such previous legislation was explicitly retained by it?

Since these laws all changed, were they "fallible?" Certainly not. Any time the Church makes a law, she makes an implicit judgment that the law is intrinsically compatible with the Catholic faith. While, due to later circumstances her laws *may* be more or less prudent from one moment in time to the next, or more or less effective in the pursuit of some goal or another, she can hardly promulgate a law which is *intrinsically* incompatible

with revealed truth, or *intrinsically* contradictory to her divine mission, viz. the salvation of souls. As Van Noort (1957) says:

The imposition of a vicious law would be, for all practical purposes, tantamount to an erroneous definition of doctrine; everyone would naturally conclude that what the Church had commanded squared with sound doctrine.

[The Church] would *not* be a teacher of the Christian way of life, for by its laws it would induce corruption in the practice of religious life. (Vol II, pp. 115-16, *emphasis* retained)

Does Reverend Crawford realize the implications of his contention that canon law is fallible? It means, in principle, that the Church could be *responsible* for error, that *due principally to her own actions* she could lead souls to Hell. That she is in cohort with the world, the flesh, and the devil. If he is willing to carry that logic out then we certainly don't see why he bothers with Catholicism at all; such is hardly the pillar of truth described by St. Paul. We certainly wouldn't bother belonging to that kind of Church. Would the reader?

Universality

Reverend Crawford also says that Canon Law is fallible because it isn't universal. By universal, Reverend Crawford evidently means an application to everyone, everywhere. A logician would say that this is an argument that "proves too much." We challenge him to name a *single* law which has ever been universal in this sense. Liturgical laws certainly aren't, as there are close to two dozen Catholic rites of sacraments between east and west, and at that, certain liturgical laws only apply to certain people: laws governing the order of mass only apply to priests, laws regulating the form of marriage only apply to engaged couples, and so on. And penal laws certainly aren't universal in Crawford's sense, since they only apply to criminals. Laws governing fast and abstinence aren't either, since they only apply to certain age groups. And of course, laws governing the construction of religious orders, the faculties of confessors, the resignation of offices, the annulments of marriages, etc. all only apply to certain classes of people. Need we go on? By Reverend Crawford's standard, there is *no such thing* as a universal law.

Now, Reverend Crawford's reasoning was simply this: the first canon of the 1917 Code states that it (the law) does not

pertain to the Oriental Churches²⁴. He should have looked closer, though, starting with the actual bull of promulgation:

Having invoked the aid of Divine grace, and relying upon the authority of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, of Our own accord and with certain knowledge, and in the fullness of the Apostolic power with which we are invested, by this Our Constitution, which we wish to be valid for all time, we promulgate, decree, and order that the present Code, just as it is compiled, shall have from this time forth the power of law for the Universal Church, and we confide it to your [i.e., the episcopate's] custody and vigilance. (Pope Benedict XV Bull of Promulgation, cited in Augustine, 1918, p. 67)

Next, how about the actual text of the canon? It reads:

Although in the Code of canon law the discipline of the Oriental Church is frequently referenced, nevertheless this [Code] applies only to the Latin Church and does not bind the Oriental, unless it treats of things that, by their nature, apply to the Oriental. (1917 CIC, C. 1, trans Peters, 2001, p. 29)

So it isn't true to say, blankly, that the law simply "doesn't apply" to the Eastern Churches. The first canon is in the code's book of *general rules*, and this canon merely states that *as a general rule*, the disciplines of the code are not meant to replace the disciplinary practices in the east, because those Churches:

Have for a long time retained, without objection from Rome, their traditional government and discipline. The Code, by this first canon, confirms that traditional policy. (Bouscaren & Ellis, 1946, pp. 15-16)

And if we take any canonist at random, they all admit that any time the code treats of faith or morals, it pertains to the Oriental Church by its very nature (Augustine, 1918, Vol. I, pp. 72-3; Bouscaren & Ellis, p. 16; Meehan, 1918, p. 45; Woywod, 1918, p. 1; Woywod,

²⁴ Our audience is primarily Latin Catholics, but there are a variety of different Churches besides the Latin (Western) Church. The Eastern or Oriental Churches include a variety of ancient rites and governments. Some of the more notable ones include the Melkites, Maronites, Byzantines (of varying ethnic rites), Malabars, etc. These are not to be confused with the schismatic Orthodox churches which often bear the same names. The various eastern Catholic churches are fully Catholic, although their sacramental rites and government may be more or less alien to the knowledge or experience of many Latin Catholics.

1957, p. 1). Canon 737 (which teaches on items *necessary for salvation*) obviously pertains to faith, canon 1239 arguably so, as an extension of the principle of Canon 737²⁵.

But canon law's infallibility is already proven even before proving that these *particular* canons do apply to the east. *The law itself* is promulgated to the universal Church; and while a particular canon therein may or may not have certain exemptions and scopes of applicability, that doesn't somehow make those laws capable of intrinsic error.

Let's conclude our discussion of canon law's universality by carrying out the logic of Reverend Crawford. If the Church is fallible in creating a law any time that law doesn't apply to everyone everywhere, how are the sacraments (for example) protected? Liturgical law is part of the Church's positive law²⁶, and it has been somewhat frequently changed or re-legislated throughout history (e.g. Pope St. Pius V's *Quo Primum*, Pope St. Pius X's *Divino Afflatu*, Pope Pius XII's Holy Week reforms and *Sacramentum Ordinis*, etc.). *Quo Primum*, for instance, only applies to Catholics in the west, and at that, not even all western Catholics, and at that, *only clergy*. So, per Reverend Crawford's conditions, *Quo Primum* was not divinely protected from the possibility of erring: it's fallible. It's a pretty ritual, sure, but we're not guaranteed of its doctrinal integrity. For all we know, it's an aesthetic ruse to attract people to a Church that's been teaching soteriological heresy for five hundred years. Pope St. Pius V was the pope under whom Trent's teachings were disseminated, and we know that this dissemination coincided with baptism of desire

²⁵ Canon 1239 instructs catechumens who die without baptism to be given Christian burial. Now, if it were the case that the Church has solemnly defined that those who die without baptism are *categorically reprobate*, it seems to follow that such a practice would be *intrinsically* impious, for at the very least it would communicate a hope of salvation for those whom the Church has clearly defined *no such hope exists*.

²⁶ Readers might argue that Canon Law and Liturgical Law are not the same thing. This is technically true (there is much overlap, though, since canon law prescribes that liturgical law be followed), but all of the same arguments regarding canon law's infallibility are the same arguments which prove liturgical law's infallibility; mainly, that if the Church authored impious, immoral, or invalid liturgical formulas she would be complicit in the destruction of souls.

being universally taught by the ordinary magisterium, so the timeline certainly matches up for such an argument.

Infallibility of the Footnotes

Reverend Crawford might be beginning to see the sort of absurdities that ensue from the conditions he's put on canon law's infallibility, since in his Untitled 2018 Booklet he does not use the arguments we've just addressed. Instead, he says:

Canon Law is not infallible in itself. The infallibility for Canon Law rests on the footnotes and sources that is given for each Canon. These sources must be looked up and observed if they come from an infallible source, such as a Creed of the Church, a Council, or an Ex Cathedra Statement. I have a letter from yourself [Bishop Pivarunas], which says that *the sources* for each particular Canon are what are infallible but not the canon itself. (p. 18, *emphasis retained*)

We of course have no access to this letter, but we're sure Reverend Crawford misunderstood it. What the letter probably said was something along the lines of what we said earlier, viz. the difference between infallible and immutable, or it may simply have said that Canon Law *has* footnotes, and that those footnotes often indicate infallible *sources* of law. Which of course is *true*, although it's a complete *non-sequitur* in logic (i.e., "it doesn't follow") to suppose this means that *only* the footnotes themselves, and not the *actual law* are infallible!

But suppose that Reverend Crawford *had* correctly understood the letter, and it really said that. Why would he take Bishop Pivarunas's word for it? That seems to be the most obvious, pressing question. He calls Pivarunas obstinate and stubborn, and accuses him of having teachings separated from the unity of the Church (p. 31). And he's using this same person to understand *canon law*? According to Crawford, Pivarunas can't even get the basics of *what is necessary for salvation* right. Yet somehow he is a trustworthy source on how to interpret a highly technical and complex body of universal legislation. This is a lazy and convenient argument from Crawford. If he's *right* about Bishop Pivarunas, then what is he doing *listening* to him? Why didn't he stop to read the law, its commentators, or its promulgation decree? In all other things he's gone "right to the horse's mouth" (or so he would have us believe, as we'll see in

Chapter Six) but when it comes to canon law, he's perfectly content to get his information second-hand—from a source "obstinately opposing the authority and Definitions of the Church" no less!

If Reverend Crawford wants to convince those who agree with him already, he's going to need a better argument for "the infallibility of the footnotes" besides "Bishop Pivarunas said so." If he wants to convince those who disagree with him, let's see him produce what the law actually says, or what its commentators and interpreters say. As a matter of fact, we've already done that. We've surveyed the legislator, the law, and its commentators—*none* of them condition the law's infallibility on the footnotes.

Which makes sense, since the footnotes *are not part of the law*. The footnotes were compiled by Cardinal Gasparri and appended to the printing to help lawyers, officials, and other authoritative teachers and interpreters of the law. But they are not *part* of the law any more than Haydock's or Challoner's commentaries are part of the Bible. And this should be obvious just from reason alone. Of what sense and use is a law if the entirety of its value is found *outside* of it? Why did Pope St. Pius X think that the law should be newly codified if the only trustworthy things in it were the very laws it was repealing and replacing?

The Council of Braga

With regard to Canon 1239 §2²⁷ in particular, Reverend Crawford argues that it isn't infallible because it doesn't have footnotes at all. Moreover, he claims that this canon is actually *at odds* with the Tradition of the Church (p. 21). To prove the "Tradition of the Church" he cites the Council of Braga (563) which taught that:

Neither the commemoration of Sacrifice nor the service of chanting is to be employed for catechumens who have died without baptism. (cited in Crawford, p. 21)

It is challenging to know where to start the deconstruction. For one, what is Crawford doing citing Braga's *canons* if only the

²⁷ Which, as a reminder, taught that "Catechumens who through no fault of their own die without baptism, are to be counted as baptized [for the purposes of Christian burial]."

footnotes are infallible? He must have forgotten about that argument. Let's see the footnotes. Setting that side, he also fails to follow his own rule of faith. He doesn't "read the words as they read" but instead enlarges the meaning of the law, telling us it allows *no* prayers for deceased catechumens, when it proscribes only against very specific ceremonies.

And it gets worse. Despite Reverend Crawford's attempt to signal this council as representative of the Church's universal discipline, we're sure that virtually no one has ever heard of it. That includes Reverend Crawford, since if he *knew* anything about it he'd not think it supported his case, *especially* in light of all the conditions he'd previously put on the Church's legislative infallibility.

This "landmark" council gathered together all the bishops in the world, except for the vast majority of them. This council was presided at by eight bishops and no pope (Lopez Bardon, 1907, §1). It is, in the scheme of notable moments in Catholic history, virtually unnoticed. And we do not say this to disparage the council, but to simply draw attention to its proper context: it was a gathering of the bishops who pertained to the See of Braga (in Portugal) to develop legislation *for their diocese*. Its laws are not by anyone's standards—*especially and most notably not by Crawford's standards*—an "infallible declaration." If Reverend Crawford actually *knew* anything about the Council of Braga, we'd all have to marvel in even greater disbelief at the unscrupulously selective logic required to claim that the Church's canon law is not universal because of exemptions to the East, while in the exact same argument elevating a diocesan synod in the Patristic age, attended by less bishops than there are fingers on our hands, and promulgated without the supervision of the Supreme Pastor, as being "truly" representative of what the Church teaches.

Despite the silliness of trying to use Braga to prove "what the Church really teaches", we *can* gain some insight into the Church's attitude toward catechumens by asking why her current universal laws do not reflect the Diocese of Braga's sixth-century laws. Answering this question will allow us to incorporate much needed historical context which will be useful for understanding

many *other* sources used by Reverend Crawford, especially the Patristic ones (e.g. Ss. Augustine, Ambrose, Nazianzen, et al.).

Disingenuous Catechumens

We generally use the word “catechumen” to refer simply to anyone who is receiving basic catechetical instruction with the intent to be baptized and become incorporated into the Church as a member. But in the early Church, the catechumenate was far more elaborate, with different ceremonies as well as divisible ranks and the possibility of ascension and descension within those ranks depending on one’s conduct. The catechumenate of today—if it can even be called that—simply consists in progressive instruction without any considerable fanfare or elaboration. Some of the actual catechumenate ceremonies from the Early Church (e.g. the salt, the breathing, etc.) are retained today as part of the baptismal ceremony, but by and large there is not much similarity between the catechumenate processes of today and the Patristic age.

There were multiple reasons for the additional rigor the Early Church applied to the catechumenate. There is of course one reason for instruction which applies even unto today, and will apply always: faith comes by hearing, and in the words of St. Augustine, “He should be asked whether he believes what he has heard, and is ready to observe it” (cited in Scannell 1908, Sec 2, §3). But in the Patristic age, there were additional, heightened considerations for ensuring that catechumens were instructed with further elaboration. For one, catechumens were often from Pagan²⁸ families or backgrounds and would need additional intellectual bolstering to effectively combat the apologetical arguments of their friends and families. Along the same lines a certain *moral* bolstering was required during the Patristic age, moreso than now, because of the violent persecutions Christians frequently underwent. Catechumens needed to be prepared for martyrdom.

²⁸ “Pagan” not in the general, colloquial sense we use today as a way of communicating that someone is *irreligious*, but Pagan in the proper *religious* sense: someone who directly and committedly worships false gods (Mars, Venus, etc.).

From the subjective perspective of many catechumens, being a catechumen was better than being a Catholic. For, a catechumen was able to engender a certain amount of social esteem and standing, being favorable before Christians who were growing in strength and number, and being treated in many ways as though they were Christians. At the same time, they were not bound to the same laws and observances. As such, it was not uncommon for catechumens to unduly delay their baptism in an attempt to “have their cake and eat it too.” These catechumens would lay claim to the name of Christian while, still being in the vestibule, they were able to quickly pivot and live immorally with fewer ramifications, and even to abandon the Christian faith “if need be” during a persecution (Gibbon 1851, p. 258; Rainy 1902, p. 446). This sort of tendency gave way to a practice of deferring baptism until death (Hunter Vol 2, p. 220; Scannell 1908, Sec 2 §3, Sec 2). The Emperor Constantine was a notable example of this imprudent and sacrilegious delay, but the practice was lamentably widespread.

Extant problems and controversies are frequently incorporated into all types of law. Indeed, they are primarily the reason that any law *changes* in the first place: to better account for new problems that old laws didn’t account for. So in a religious landscape where it was popular for catechumens to impiously defer their baptisms, what *better* way for pastors to communicate to them the necessity of baptism than by legally refusing to extend to them the courtesy of ceremony when they died? This set a clear *legal* demarcation before the catechumen to not “rest on his laurels” or assume that he had accomplished well enough that which he *hadn’t* actually accomplished.

Now, over time, as the catechumenate fell into disuse and as false churches began to spread in later Christendom, the prevalence of excessively deferred baptisms subsided. The delays the Church previously encouraged during the catechumenate process gradually shortened, curbing abuses. And once Protestant Churches were available to converts, more *prima facie* (i.e., “at face value”) confidence could be placed in a catechumen who chose the *Catholic Church* specifically. For instance, suppose an infidel in 1820 wished to become Christian, or that a Protestant had become disillusioned with his religion—he could choose to be

a Lutheran, an Anglican, a Catholic, a Calvinist, a Methodist, etc. But as we saw Brownson point out earlier, when he knocks on the door of a Catholic Church, he's already investigated *which* Christian Church is the true one, and ruled out all the non-Catholic ones, decidedly clinging to *Catholic* teaching in the face of alternative false teachings.

The point simply being that this change in the social sphere lent greater credibility to the ardor of catechumens in general, and combined with fewer liturgical delays in administering baptism, the abuses and deferrals which were formerly widespread were now no longer a concern. As a result, it was no longer expedient or especially relevant to *legislate* those problems. Consider that if a municipality has a problem with people drowning in a lake drop-off, it makes a law forbidding people to swim there. If the lake dries up and condos are built on top of it, it repeals the law—because the *problem* the law was solving doesn't really exist anymore. Likewise, when the Council of Braga convened in the Patristic age it legislated in a context where there was a serious *problem* with catechumens delaying their baptisms, so it made a law which clearly communicated to them that *they need to get baptized if they want to be treated as baptized*. There was hardly a need for such a law when the Church codified her canons in 1917.

Keep in mind that the Council of Braga governed, well, *Braga*—not the universal Church. So there's no question here of the Universal Church even *changing* its discipline in regards to how catechumens are treated; as far as we're aware, there's never been any universal legislation about catechumen burials one way or the other. But even supposing there *were* such legislation, it's quite natural that once the problem of disingenuous catechumens went away, laws *governing* that problem would go away, too.

Nazianzen and Ambrose

What these considerations imply (among other things), is that *context* matters quite a bit. And context is not always *just* historical. Often-times when dealing with some author or another context is also intertextual, meaning that what an author says in one place is affected by something else they've said in another place. A few Fathers of the Church are cited by Reverend Crawford as condemning baptism of desire. But once we add back in both

the historical context of the problems they were dealing with and incorporate their larger body of teaching, they hardly make Crawford's case.

For instance, Reverend Crawford provides what he calls St. Gregory Nazianzen's "Oration of the Holy Lights" where St. Gregory, according to Crawford, denies baptism of desire (pp. 36-7). No doubt the quote in question might appear that way if taken in a vacuum, but Catholic Truth doesn't exist in a vacuum. Now, the irony is that Crawford mistakenly says this quote comes from the "Oration of the Holy Lights." It does not. The "Oration of the Holy Lights" (381) is where Nazianzen says:

I know also a fourth baptism—that by martyrdom and blood, which also Christ himself underwent; and this one is far more august than all the others, inasmuch as it cannot be defiled by after-stains (§27).

Which of course is an *affirmation*, not a denial, of baptism of desire²⁹.

The quote that Reverend Crawford uses from St. Gregory is actually from the "Oration on Holy Baptism." This was a sermon given to catechumens on the occasion of their baptism, incidentally, the day *after* the Oration of the Holy Lights. St. Gregory, aware of the deferral problems we discussed, spends several *paragraphs* framing the quote Crawford provides around the idea of needlessly delaying baptism:

... Let us be baptized *today*, that we suffer not violence tomorrow; and let us not put off the blessing as if it were an injury... why wait for a fever to bring you this blessing, and refuse it from God? (§§ 11-12).

He isn't, as Crawford suggests, teaching against baptism of desire. The context—i.e., knowing that St. Gregory is sensitive to and aware of excessive deferrals, and knowing that *only yesterday* he'd taught the same crowd about baptism of desire—makes this abundantly clear.

²⁹ Readers may object that this refers to baptism of *blood*, rather than baptism of *desire*. However, it is generally admitted on both "sides" of the debate that one includes the other; for, if a martyr is "baptized in blood," he is receiving baptism of desire. Crawford seems to realize this and treats them as essentially the same thing. Indeed, we're not aware of anyone who denies one but not the other; it is a "package" deal, as they say.

The importance of context applies just as equally to St. Ambrose, who is quoted by Reverend Crawford to a similar end (pp. 18, 21, 37-8, 44, & 55). Like Nazianzen, Ambrose can be found appearing to “deny” baptism of desire in *De Mysteriis*, a work of similar context to Nazianzen’s: these were a series of sermons on the sacraments all given during Easter Week, delivered to neophytes. But only a few years later in his (392) funeral oration for the Emperor Valentinian who died prior to baptism³⁰ he says

But I hear that you grieve because he [Valentinian] did not receive the sacrament of baptism. Tell me: What else is in your power other than the desire, the request? But he even had this desire for a long time, that, when he should come into Italy, he would be initiated, and recently he signified a desire to be baptized by me, and for this reason above all others he thought that I ought to be summoned. Has he not, then, the grace which he desired; has he not the grace which he requested? And because he asked, he received, and therefore it is said: ‘By whatsoever death the just man shall be overtaken, his soul shall be at rest.’ (Trans McCauley, et al., pp. 287-88, §51)

The mourning saint continues his oration, offering *prayers* to God the Father on behalf of Valentinian:

If, stricken with sickness, he had deferred [baptism], he would not be entirely without Thy mercy who has been cheated by the swiftness of time, not by his own wish. Grant, therefore, to Thy servant the gift of Thy grace which he never rejected.... He who had Thy Spirit, how has he not received Thy grace? (p. 288, §52).

Once again, if we factor in all of the different informative contexts, we come to a much clearer understanding of St. Ambrose. When addressing those who knew very little of the faith, proximate to their baptism, on the *fundamentals* of the sacraments, he of course does not bother with intimating for their immature minds that one might be justified before baptism. But then when orating the funeral of one he knew well, and whose disposition he knew to have indicated the charity described by Trent, he not only *presents*

³⁰ It is worth noting that Valentinian was one of those who *was* guilty of excessive deferral, and once he finally committed to it he was killed on his way to being baptized

the teaching of baptism of desire but even *applies* it by invoking God's mercy through prayer, trusting that one whose baptism was missed by powers beyond his control will not be abandoned at judgment.

Reverend Crawford makes some pretty serious mistakes with the material he's taken from St. Augustine as well, but those are better addressed in Chapter Six because the abuses to those quotes far transcend the mere contextual mistakes he's made with Ss. Ambrose and Nazianzen.

"They can be Wrong"

We might anticipate that this attempt to clarify the teachings of the Fathers will be met with the off-hand dismissal that "they're not infallible. They can be wrong." Of course they're *fallible*, which is to say that when they teach they are not divinely protected by the Holy Ghost from the possibility of error. But granting that they're fallible is not the same thing as granting that it is *likely* for them to err on the basic, bare-minimum requirements for salvation!

So there is no mistake, let's clarify (one of the reasons) why any Catholic would ever bother seeing what a Church Father, Doctor, or theologian has to say about anything in the first place. They have a powerful, natural authority as learned men and experts in their field (which in this case happens to be the Catholic religion). As such, it is *implausible* to suppose that they would err on something as basic as the bare requisites for salvation³¹. Especially if John 3:5 "reads for itself," as we so often hear. It requires a suspension of disbelief to suppose that *this particular error* could be made by such learned men, and at that, so many of

³¹ In rebuttal to this implausibility, one might argue (as Crawford does, p. 34) that St. Thomas Aquinas denied the Immaculate Conception. But this is a token objection which, when asserted confidently, reveals unfamiliarity with the issue. On this point we recommend Lane's (1998) short summary of the theological controversy surrounding St. Thomas's apparent "denial". In short, theologians have been arguing amongst themselves for generations whether or not this is true. St. Thomas's point of dissension was principally against those who argued that Our Lady *was not redeemed*, and indeed the very definition of 1854 is sensitive to this objection, with Pope Pius IX being sure to assert that she *was* redeemed "in a manner more sublime" (*Ineffabilis Deus*, 1854, Sec. 8). St. Thomas affirms that Our Lady was without original and actual sin in his (1255) commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (D .44, Q. 1, a. 4) and his principles were used *to* define the Immaculate Conception, all facts which cannot be easily reconciled with the *carte blanche* assertion that he "denied the Immaculate Conception".

them! It's like arguing that a learned lawyer would tell their client that murder isn't against the law, or that a professional carpenter would recommend using scissors to cut oak. Being fallible is not the same thing as being a *bumbling idiot*.

We know that Reverend Crawford nowhere explicitly asserts that the Fathers are "bumbling idiots." But if they're not, then he'll need to abandon his rhetoric that the Church has clearly defined, once and for all, etc. Because so long as he retains that kind of rhetoric, he has no business citing the Fathers, Doctors, or any other authors in support of his view when they're erring on clearly defined matters necessary for salvation.

Reverend Crawford tells us that there is *one* Doctor who managed to teach correctly on salvation, St. Peter Canisius. He says that Canisius "makes no mention of 'three baptisms' and quotes the Council of Trent to prove that Baptism *with water* is necessary" (p. 44). What St. Peter Canisius teaches is that baptism is necessary for salvation. Guess who else teaches that? *Everyone who teaches baptism of desire*. So either they are all bumbling idiots who don't realize that they're contradicting themselves from one page to the next, or the necessity of baptism is compatible with baptism of desire.

Which is precisely why (we suppose) Bishop Pivarunas asked Reverend Crawford to produce an explicit *condemnation* of baptism of desire (p. 39; Appendix A, Q 17). Knowing that it is taught everywhere, and further knowing that wherever it is taught it is *also* taught that baptism is necessary, the onus is on Reverend Crawford to do much more than provide a source simply teaching that baptism is necessary. He needs to show that baptism of desire is actually *condemned*, and explicitly, to prove that there's any merit to the idea that the two are contradictory. He needs to prove that the supposed tension between the two exists outside of his own mind.

But all Reverend Crawford does is *assume* that baptism's necessity mutually excludes baptism of desire. We know this because only with such an assumption does St. Peter Canisius's quote even remotely appear relevant to the question. If we assume, on the other hand, that baptism's necessity is in perfect

harmony with baptism of desire, then St. Peter's teaching is a *non-sequitur* on the issue. And of course we needn't assume such a thing at all, we've already proven it in Chapter Two.

If we're going to go to fathers, doctors, or theologians and avail ourselves of their natural authority and expertise, let's actually *learn* from them, not sift through them looking for whatever agrees with us. Had Reverend Crawford written pensively, acknowledging that some of the sources he uses disagree with him elsewhere, and then made some genuine effort to reconcile that apparent disagreement, we'd still disagree with his conclusion but we'd certainly find little cause to criticize his approach. Such as it is, there is no such pensiveness. There is no such consideration. He eagerly cites them when they agree with his ideas, and just as eagerly points out that "they can be wrong" when they don't.

Concluding Thoughts

We've just finished discussing *one* of the reasons that Catholics go to the teachings of individually learned men. They have a natural authority and expertise in the Catholic religion and are therefore useful resources for questions about religion, just as a lawyer would be a useful resource on questions of law. Simply put, they know more about the topic than we do. Their understanding of Catholic teaching (whether as witnesses of the ordinary magisterium, e.g. Bellarmine's witness of all the theologians teaching baptism of desire; or as witnesses of the solemn magisterium, e.g. St. Alphonsus's proof of baptism of desire through Trent) *counts more than ours does*.

But that's not the full extent of their utility in matters of religion and religious controversy. There is another role they play, one which we think probably goes overlooked and possibly even completely unnoticed by our interlocutors. That is the role of doctrinal *exemplar*.

What we mean is this: if we *already know* that some doctrine or another is taught universally, we might select a *particular instance* of the teaching to argue the point. Individually no man is infallible besides the pope, but as we discussed in Chapter One, the *whole Church* cannot err, so if the whole Church

teaches or believes something, we know *by that fact* such a teaching or belief is Catholic doctrine. With this view, St. Thomas, or St. Bellarmine, or St. Alphonsus, or any of the myriad of theologians one could cite on the matter isn't being quoted to "prove" that baptism of desire is Catholic teaching. It's *already proved* by the universal teaching and belief of the Church, and the chosen Doctor, Father, or theologian is being cited as a *singularly* great explanation or exposition of the doctrine.

The *best* argument for proving that anything belongs to the deposit of faith is by appealing to the ordinary magisterium. We acquiesce to make other arguments only because our opponents are not convinced of the Church's infallibility in such teachings, but among those agreed on the point there is no greater testimony to Catholic Truth than what the indefectible Church persistently teaches and believes. Among those who are sensitive to the Church's ordinary voice, it is only *natural* to seek out what the great Catholic teachers say, given that they are emissaries of that voice.

Summary

- We have argued that canon law is infallible by showing how the Church is quickly ruined if it isn't, and by citing the promulgation bull, the law itself, as well as approved interpreters and commentators of it. Canon law is not only infallible, but it teaches baptism of desire and incorporates into Christian religious life practices which are only possibly pious if baptism of desire is compatible with Revelation.
- We have also discussed the Council of Braga and how it doesn't meet any of Reverend Crawford's standards for infallibility, and explained that the reason it forbade certain ceremonies for catechumens is explained by the fact that it legislated during a time when excessive and routine deferrals of baptism were a widespread problem.
- That context must be kept in mind when reading patristic material on baptism, too. When Reverend Crawford attempts to leverage the Fathers to support him, not only does he ignore *that* context, he ignores what they say elsewhere and simply dismisses them as wrong when they

disagree with him. It would be much more consistent for him to just avoid them altogether, but we don't *truly* recommend that, since we concluded this chapter by arguing for a multi-faceted value of the Fathers and Doctors.

- This value consists in their natural authority as learned men who are more qualified to have opinions on certain issues than we are; it consists in them being reliable *witnesses* to the universal faith of their time; and it consists in them being contributive voices to the ordinary magisterium—singular examples of what is taught everywhere.

This chapter more or less concludes our principal deconstruction of Reverend Crawford's arguments against baptism of desire. In Chapter Two we provided the bulk of our direct doctrinal arguments, but in this chapter we focused more on some ancillary arguments of his. The arguments Reverend Crawford made about canon law, the Council of Braga, the Church Fathers, etc. are not his "main" points. These points were his attempt to reconcile his beliefs with Canon Law and to bolster his beliefs by showing they are supported by the Tradition of the Church. As we've seen, the more one *tries* to maintain denial of baptism of desire, the stranger and stretchier one's arguments have to get. So we see the entirety of the Church's positive legislation thrown under the bus of fallibility, the hyper-elevation of long defunct diocesan laws as representative of "what the Church really teaches," and the selective reliance on Church Fathers whom, by Reverend Crawford's own argument, are mostly ignorant of what salvation requires.

Chapter Five: On Periodic Continence

Introduction

Periodic Continence is the systematic practice of purposefully limiting the marital act to sterile periods. Catholic theologians prior to Vatican II also referred to this as “Rhythm”, and in the post-Vatican II era, it’s commonly referred to as “NFP”, an abbreviation for “Natural Family Planning.” For our purposes, we will use the system’s earliest given name, “Periodic Continence.”

Reverend Crawford claims Periodic Continence violates both the Divine and Natural Laws, and is therefore never lawful under any circumstances. Resultantly, he claims that Pope Pius XII erred in his (1951) “Allocution to Midwives”, when he taught that

There are serious motives, such as those often mentioned in the so-called medical, eugenic, and social “indications”, that can exempt for a long time, perhaps even the whole duration of the marriage, from the positive and obligatory carrying out of the act. From this it follows that observing the non-fertile periods alone can be lawful only under a moral aspect. Under the conditions mentioned, it really is so. But if, according to a rational and just judgement, there are no similar grave reasons of a personal nature or deriving from external circumstances, then the determination to avoid habitually the fecundity of the union while at the same time to continue fully satisfying their sensuality, can be derived only from a false appreciation of life and from reasons having nothing to do with proper ethical laws. (Cited in *The Catholic Almanac*, p. 84)

Crawford’s argument not only entails a rejection of Pope Pius XII’s teaching (1951), but also logically includes rejecting the Holy Office of Pope Pius IX (1853), the Holy Office of Pope Leo XIII (1880), and the Holy Office of Pope Pius XI (1932), each of which affirmed the morality of periodic continence, not to mention every theologian who has taught on the issue since the science of it became refined and popularized in the early 1900’s.

What follows is our assessment of Crawford’s claims and the evidence he provides in attempt to support those claims. This chapter is neither a promotion nor a favorable recommendation of

Periodic Continence. We would not promote nor favorably recommend it any more than we would promote or favorably recommend cutting off one's own foot, even though for serious reasons both can be licit. Our objective is simply to show that and why Crawford's position is false, thereby exonerating Pope Pius XII and the Church at large from charges of error. In brief preview, we've found that Reverend Crawford manifests a near complete ignorance or misunderstanding of the relevant scholastic and philosophical concepts needed to engage the topic of marital morality; that his arguments are not really arguments at all but just unsupported assertions; that virtually every attempt he *does* make to support a claim of his requires him to violently divorce teachings from their context and omit large swaths of teachings that are inconvenient to his case; and that his understanding of Divine Providence is a dangerous caricature of what the Church actually teaches.

The Question

Reverend Crawford's arguments against Periodic Continence happen early in his Untitled Booklet, from pages 8-11. To start, let's consider the question Bishop Pivarunas posed to Crawford, to which these pages were intended to be a response.

Pivarunas presents the following papal teachings from Pope Pius IX for Reverend Crawford's consideration:

It is not sufficient for learned Catholics to accept and revere the aforesaid dogmas of the Church, but that it is also necessary to subject themselves to the decisions pertaining to doctrine which are issued by the Pontifical Congregations, and also to those forms of doctrine which are held by the common and constant consent of Catholics as theological truths and conclusions, so certain that opinions opposed to these same forms of doctrine, although they cannot be called heretical, nevertheless deserve some theological censure. (*Tuas Libenter* [1863], DZ 1684.) (Q1, Appendix A, slight reformatting)

And:

Condemned Proposition: The obligation by which Catholic teachers and writers are absolutely bound is restricted to those matters only which are proposed by the infallible judgment of the Church, to be believed by all as dogmas of

the faith. (Encyclical *Quanta Cura* and *Syllabus of Errors* [1864], DZ 1699, 1722.) (Q1, Appendix A, slight reformatting).

And then he simply asks:

In light of the same above papal quotes, do you believe a Catholic can reject Pius XII's teaching on natural family planning which was published in the official *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*? If so, what are your reasons and what theologians can you quote who teach that you can reject such papal teaching? (Q2, Appendix A)

Reverend Crawford boldly answers, "Yes [we can reject this teaching]" because "all Catholics are obliged to obey Divine Law above the teachings, laws, and authority of man" (p. 8). He omits the actual papal teachings of Pius IX from his transcription of the Bishop's question, so it may seem like an easier proposition to swallow when one reads it and doesn't realize exactly what is being rejected—not just Pope Pius XII's teaching on periodic continence, but Pope Pius IX's teachings on *what Catholics need to believe*. We certainly would not say these teachings can be glibly disregarded on the grounds that they are merely the "authority of man."

Archbishop Murray's Letter

In response to the second part of the question (i.e., the request to provide theologians who would support a rejection of such papal teaching), Reverend Crawford presents Archbishop John G. Murray's (1940) private letter to a Mrs. R.A. Vashro³² (cited in Crawford, p. 10). Note that Murray does *not* actually answer the question that Crawford is supposed to be replying to (viz., lawful rejection of papal teaching). Instead, Crawford uses Murray as a sort of "proof" that theologians (or, at least one of them) have rejected periodic continence.

It is strange and inconsistent for him to attempt to use the private letter of a bishop to argue against the teachings of a pope,

³² Mrs. Vashro was the mother of Mrs. Jeanne Dvorak. Mrs. Dvorak wrote a booklet entitled "Natural Family Planning and the Christian Moral Code" in which she included Archbishop Murray's letter to her mother. Mrs. Dvorak's book is, to our knowledge, the only place this letter has ever been published. We contacted the archdiocese of St. Paul's archivist but they did not have a record of the letter.

since he is otherwise so quick to dismiss the common, universal, and ordinary public teaching of bishops, doctors, saints, catechisms, and theology manuals in all other instances. If Archbishop Murray's letter actually supported Crawford's claims, he'd be in for a rough time explaining why none of the arguments put against him—say, from the published and approved works St. Alphonsus, St. Thomas, or any of the other esteemed Doctors of the Church—"count" in the discussion, while the private letter of a local bishop to a housewife suddenly suffices to settle all doubts. But the fact is that Murray's letter doesn't even support Crawford's claims. .

He's taken it out of context and read into it what he wanted it to say. In his one comment on the letter, Reverend Crawford claims that:

John G. Murray, Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, from 1931 to 1956, is an example of a bishop who publicly denounced the sinful and malodorous rhythm method (p. 8).

This is misleading right out of the gate, since *nowhere* in the letter does Murray denounce anything as *sinful*. A careful reading of the letter and an incorporation of its context would have clearly communicated that Murray wasn't addressing the *morality* of periodic continence at all. The Archbishop's letter is a response to the imprudent publicity of it, which was a violation of his and the Church's official stance prohibiting the favorable *public* recommendation of the method.

Context and Meaning

The letter concerns a certain "program" of Father Le Beau's. Archbishop Murray says that he had previously told Fr. Le Beau that he (Fr. Lebeau) was acting contrary to a "prohibition" imposed by Murray on the Archdiocese. The most memorable part of Murray's letter is arguably his description of the "notorious and malodorous Rhythm System... gaining publicity out of Chicago" (*not* "sinful and malodorous", as Crawford says).

Now, there were numerous books and pamphlets on the "Rhythm System" being rapidly published and widely circulated to the general public after 1932, when Chicago Doctor Leo Latz published and enthusiastically promoted his book, *The Rhythm*

and Fertility in Women³³. Though an awareness of the existence of sterile periods was not new, there was little certainty about them until research in the late 20's and early 30's established the timing of the fertility cycle with far more precision and certainty than ever before. Dr. Latz's book introduced this information to the American public for the first time, along with calendars and recommended plans, making it highly accessible to any and everyone. His book, and the numerous other books and pamphlets it spawned, quickly spread throughout the Catholic populace, and led to great confusion and error amongst Catholics concerning the licit use of periodic continence.

Thus, many Catholics began using it indiscriminately to avoid having children for any reason, or even no reason at all. Latz's commercialized "Rhythm System" became "notorious and malodorous", since its publicity out of Chicago facilitated widespread confusion and abuse amongst American Catholics. The important distinctions governing its actual licit use became popularly blurred, ignored, and abandoned as more and more books and pamphlets spread throughout the Catholic population. Fr. Calkins (1948) makes this point in his article, "Rhythm: the Unhappy Compromise":

What about Rhythm? That simple question is rapidly becoming a stormcenter of controversy. It comes up during parish missions, Cana Conferences, bull sessions on careers, even high school retreats. All too often, wrong answers are given, bum theology is handed out. Even more often, right answers are given but very imprudently. These cause confusion among the laity and lead to cynical questioning (§1)

Calkins, a straight-shooter, complained that as a result:

Catholic couples have gone hog-wild in the abusive employment of Rhythm. Theological distinctions have been pitched completely in the utterly selfish desire to avoid conception at any cost... The thing is out of hand. A method meant to be a temporary solution of a critical problem has become a way of life, a very selfish, luxury-loving, materialistic way of life. (§§ 10 & 12)

³³ Latz's work was responsible for coining the term "Rhythm" as a synonym for "Periodic Continence"

But observe carefully that the problem Calkins describes isn't with rhythm as *such*, it's that:

Too many priests are acting imprudently in the public recommendation (in classrooms and sermons) of the method which the Holy See has cautioned "*the confessor may cautiously suggest*." There is abundant evidence increasing daily that only spiritually strong couples can be trusted really to observe Rhythm prudently, even when a sufficient reason is present. (Calkins §10, *emphasis retained*)

The Church's attitude toward *teaching* and *recommending* periodic continence was always very reserved, cautious, and prudent. Fr. Giese (1944) explains:

The attitude of caution which characterizes the pronouncements of the Holy See and individual members of the hierarchy [toward the teaching of periodic continence] is unmistakable. As evidence of this, we might cite another portion of the decree of the [1937] Fifth Provincial Council of Malines:

The priests, lest they appear to be giving in to material egoism (which is) universally increasing, should abstain from *any indiscreet exposition* of this system, be it from the pulpit, or in any assembly whatsoever. . . The editors, authors and sellers of books or periodicals which popularize or recommend this method "ex professo" must be reproved. (Giese, p. 82)

Periodic continence was *indeed* controversial when Murray was writing, but *not* because there was any confusion among Catholic teachers as to whether or not it was intrinsically *evil* (since *none* of them thought that), but over a *practical* and *social* question regarding the degree of publicity and dissemination the system should receive.

Given that, it should be clear what Murray meant by labeling the Rhythm system "that was gaining publicity out of Chicago" as "notorious and malodorous" (*not*, as Crawford says, "*sinful* and malodorous"). *Notorious* means "generally known and talked of," and especially, "widely and unfavorably known" while *malodorous* means "having a bad odor," or "highly improper" (Merriam-Webster). The imprudent publicity of the Rhythm System

was certainly “widely and unfavorably known” and in a “highly improper” way. That publicity was leading to the widespread sinful abuse of it, against the Holy See’s instructions that it only be cautiously recommended in private. Obviously Fr. Le Beau’s public and favorable recommendations of the system—which are the whole reason Murray and Vashro were even communicating in the first place—exacerbated this problem and drew the ire of the Bishop.

Knowing the Church’s official stance, the clergy’s attitude, and the public approach to Periodic Continence extant to Archbishop Murray’s time, we have the necessary context to understand his letter. He was not addressing the *theology* of whether or not it is always sinful, or under what conditions it isn’t. He was denouncing the imprudent and indiscriminate public recommendation of it as favorable, perfectly aligned with the Church’s prohibitions on teaching it.

Milestones in the Church and Science: A Brief History From 1853-1951

In wrapping up our discussion about Archbishop Murray and the socio-religious landscape in which controversies over periodic continence first arose, it is fitting to provide a brief historical outline of the Church, science, and periodic continence. Notice that the Holy Office has maintained with unwavering consistency that in principle, periodic continence is moral, both before and after periodic continence became a more precise science. For perspective, the Church’s tolerance of periodic continence predates the Definitions of the Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility. It is not a *novelty* by any stretch of the imagination, and Pope Pius XII was just one in a long line of popes to affirm its morality.

1853 (March 2nd): Rome speaks about Periodic Continence for the first time on March 2, 1853. The Holy Office of the Sacred Penitentiary of Pope Pius IX answered a *dubium* submitted by the Bishop of Amiens, France. The bishop asked,

Are those who do not use the marriage right except on such days [‘which conception cannot occur’], to be disturbed, especially if they have legitimate reasons for abstaining from the conjugal act?

The Sacred Penitentiary replied that:

Those spoken of in the request are not to be disturbed, providing they do nothing to impede conception. (Cited in Griesse, p. 36)

1863: The Pfluger Theory becomes one of the first published and widely received scientific theories concerning the fertility cycle. Some knowledge had previously existed about a fertility cycle and sterile periods, but with little certainty or evidence to support it. The Pfluger Theory purported that menstruation and ovulation coincide, and that the period immediately preceding and following menstruation was the most propitious time for conception, though it still left uncertainty as to timing. It was accepted by practically all physicians of the late 19th century, until it was refuted in 1898. (Griesse, p. 3).

1880 (June 16th): Rome speaks about periodic continence the second time, on June 16, 1880. Father Le Comte submitted several questions:

1. Whether married couples may have intercourse during such sterile periods without committing mortal or venial sin[?]
2. Whether the confessor may suggest such a procedure either to the wife who detests the onanism of her husband but cannot correct him; or to either spouse who shrinks from having numerous children [?] (Cited in Griesse, p. 37).

The Holy Office of the Sacred Penitentiary of Pope Leo XIII replied:

Married couples who use their marriage right in the aforesaid manner are not to be disturbed, and the confessor may suggest the opinion in question, cautiously however, to those married people whom he has tried in vain by other means to dissuade from the detestable crime of onanism. (Cited in Griesse, p. 37)

1898: The previously widely accepted Pfluger Theory is refuted by Knauer, and again in 1901 by Halban. This brought the medical world to the realization that the relation between menstruation and ovulation was still a mystery, and thus resulted in increased uncertainty and doubt among physicians about the accuracy and probability of sterile periods (Griesse, p. 4).

1924: Dr. Kyusaku Ogino of Japan publishes his discovery of the precise limited periods in which conception could be predicted, based on the common view that a woman is capable of conceiving only during a certain period of each 28 day lunar month (Griese p. 4; Noonan 1965, p. 444).

1929: Dr. Hermann Knaus of Czechoslovakia publishes research reaching the same conclusions as Ogino, despite Ogino's research being unknown to Knaus (i.e. independently established). These scientific discoveries become known as the Ogino-Knaus theory (Griese, p. 4; Noonan p. 444).

1930 (August 15): The Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church passes a resolution permitting the use of artificial/material contraception. This was the first time in history that a Church claiming the name "Christian" gave an official declaration permitting onanism or contraception (Noonan, p. 409).

1930 (December 31st): In response to the Lambeth resolutions passed only four months prior, Pope Pius XI published his encyclical *Casti Connubii* ("Chaste Wedlock"). The encyclical notably condemns the deliberate frustration of the intrinsic nature of the marital act. (Vermeersch 1932, p. 39; Noonan p. 424)

1932 (June 20): Rome speaks for a third time on periodic continence. Just a year and a half after *Casti Connubii*, Pope Pius XI's Holy Office reaffirms the 1880 Holy Office decree permitting Periodic Continence.

Regarding the Exclusive Use of the Infertile Period

Qu. Whether the practice is licit in itself by which spouses who, for just and grave causes, wish to avoid offspring in a morally upright way, abstain from the use of marriage – by mutual consent and with upright motives – except on those days which, according to certain recent [medical] theories, conception is impossible for natural reasons.

Resp. Provided for by the *Response of the Sacred Penitentiary* of June 16, 1880. (*Texta et Documenta series Theologica* 1942, trans. Harrison).

1932: Chicago Doctor Leo Latz publishes "The Rhythm of Sterility and Fertility in Women," which introduced the Ogino-Knaus theory

to the American public and the English speaking world for the first time (Griese, p. 2). Latz coins the term “Rhythm”, and the application of the Ogino-Knaus theory becomes popularly known as the Rhythm method. This resulted in the widespread indiscriminate distribution of pamphlets, books, teachings, and favorable recommendations that were detrimental to society and the Church, as explained previously.

1937: The Fifth Provincial Council of Malines under Cardinal Van Roey reaffirms the licit use of Periodic Continence:

(1) the use of the sterile period presents dangers, such as the encouragement of egotism, the unilateral denial of marriage rights in the fertile period, the lessening of conjugal love, the willingness even to abort a child conceived by mistake; (2) the method is consequently not to be proposed except to onanists, to wean them from their sin, and to others who have adequate reasons for avoiding conception; (3) adequate reasons for avoiding conception are danger to the wife from childbirth, or ‘truly serious economic difficulty in feeding numerous offspring. (Noonan, p. 444)

1951: Rome speaks a fourth and fifth time on Periodic Continence. Pope Pius XII reaffirms the licit use of Periodic Continence in his October 29th Allocution to Midwives and in his November 26th “Address to the National Congress of the ‘Family Front’ and the Association of Large Families” (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1951, pp. 846 & 859).

The “Intrinsic Nature of the Act”

So we’ve established that Archbishop Murray never weighed in on the morality of periodic continence, and we’ve also, in the process, seen that the Holy Office has defended the morality of periodic continence for more than a hundred years, ever since the system was first known to man. Given that Pope Pius IX taught that it is “Necessary [for Catholics] to subject themselves to the decisions pertaining to doctrine which are issued by the Pontifical Congregations” (Denz. 1684), we would be content to simply rest our case here. Why should we believe Reverend Crawford that periodic continence is abjectly sinful when we have a consistent affirmation of its morality from Rome, dating back to even before

Vatican I? To help satisfy any doubts, we will offer a more detailed explanation of why periodic continence can be lawful.

Most of Reverend Crawford's argument against the lawfulness of periodic continence is him arguing that it is a form of contraception. To prove this, he relies mainly on Pope Pius XI's (1930) encyclical *Casti Connubii*. *Casti Connubii* is arguably the greatest teaching exposition on marriage and marital morality available to us, especially as regards the sorts of acts which are forbidden:

Let us discuss the offspring, which some have the audacity to call the troublesome burden of marriage, and which they declare should be studiously avoided not by honorable continence (permitted even in matrimony when both spouses consent), but by frustration of the natural act. Indeed, some vindicate themselves for this criminal abuse on the ground that they are tired of children and wish merely to fulfill their desires without the consequent burden; others on the ground that they can neither observe continence, nor because of difficulties of the mother or of family circumstances cannot have offspring. *But surely no reason, not even the gravest, can bring it about that what is intrinsically against nature becomes in accord with nature, and honorable.* Since, moreover, the conjugal act by its very nature is destined for the generating of offspring, *those who in the exercise of it deliberately deprive it of its natural force and power, act contrary to nature, and do something that is shameful and intrinsically bad.* (Denz. 2239)

The italicized portions above have always been understood to be condemnations of contraception. But why? The word *contraception* never appears once in the entire encyclical.

As was the case with Trent's teachings on baptism, Pope Pius XI's teachings on marriage are not just informed by but also *communicated through* scholastic concepts and terms. So he doesn't say "contraception is evil" (in as many words), but instead places the focal point on the *nature* of human acts. In scholasticism, "nature" is more or less a synonym for *substance* or *essence*, and a thing's nature has direct reference to its final cause (i.e., its objective *purpose*). Even the word "deliberate", though communicating the point, does not quite capture the

penetrative depth of Thomism in the encyclical, as Fr. Vermeersch (1938) points out:

In the translation, “deliberately” is chosen as the English equivalent of the Latin “de industria hominum.” “By the agency of men” is a more exact rendering (p. 85).

What we intend by these considerations is to draw the reader’s attention to the fact that, like Trent, *Casti Connubii* lacks the plain and colloquially operable language Reverend Crawford’s case depends on. Like Trent, it draws many of its conclusions from the Church’s metaphysical tradition, as developed by St. Thomas. For a timely reminder, let’s revisit Pope St. Pius X’s warning to students of religion:

The capital theses in the philosophy of St. Thomas are not to be placed in the category of opinions capable of being debated one way or another, but are to be considered as the foundations upon which the whole science of natural and divine things is based; if such principles are once removed or in any way impaired, it must necessarily follow that students of the sacred sciences will ultimately fail to perceive so much as the meaning of the words in which the dogmas of divine revelation are proposed by the magistracy of the Church (*Doctoris Angelici*, §3).

We cannot even *understand*—never mind *love*—the Church while at the same time being ambivalent toward her philosophy.

But there is no need to be intimidated, because the crucial distinction that *Casti Connubii* makes is one we suspect most Catholics are already at least intuitively familiar with. It’s the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic. Among distinctions it’s a fairly basic one, and is in fact the very first thing defined by Fr. Dominic Prummer (1956) in his popular morality handbook for priests:

The end of *an action* (the intrinsic and objective end) is that to which the action tends of its very nature directly and immediately: for example, the natural end of an act of almsgiving is the relief of the neighbour’s need. The end of *the agent* (the extrinsic and subjective end) is that which the agent himself chooses as the primary or secondary end of his own action. This may but does not necessarily coincide with the end of the action itself. (p. 5, *emphasis retained*)

Intrinsic pertains directly and immediately to the nature of something. “Nature” not in the *National Geographic* sense but in the relevant, scholastic sense.

Extrinsic, on the other hand, deals with the motives of a person, or their subjective reasons for doing something. In the example given by Fr. Prummer, suppose someone gave alms because they wanted to *appear* generous, or maybe they were court-ordered to community service and were motivated by a desire to satisfy the law. In either case, their motives would not be to relieve their neighbor’s need. But in both cases, the *nature* of the almsgiving act is left completely undisturbed, and therefore its end unaffected.

With it in mind that *intrinsic* matters pertain directly to the nature of a thing or act, and that *extrinsic* factors cannot even in principle affect the intrinsic nature of the act conducted, let’s reconsider all of Reverend Crawford’s attempts to establish the identical natures of contraception and periodic continence: (all **emphases** added)

- “[Periodic Continence and contraception] are both of contraceptive **mentality**” (2017, p. 3).
- “They are both deliberately **intending** to avoid conception” (2017, p. 3).
- “[Periodic Continence] follows the same **mentality** and **purpose** [of contraceptive use]” (2018, p. 11).
- “Both are **intended** to avoid conception of a child” (2018, p. 11).
- “[Periodic Continence] is a form of contraception that can be used to **purposely** avoid the primary end of the marital act.” (2018, p. 11).

None of these arguments have anything at all to do with the nature of the act. Without exception, they’re all *extrinsic* observations. And as such, they’re completely and entirely outside of the bounds of what Pope Pius XI condemns in *Casti Connubii*.

Superseding and Subordinating

The way that Reverend Crawford attempted to frame his argument for an essential similarity between contraception and periodic continence was by claiming that:

Divine law teaches that the primary end of marriage is the procreation of children³⁴, and the secondary end is the mutual love of the spouses. The Church has defined that the secondary end (conjugal fidelity) can never supersede the primary end (procreation of children). (p. 8)

Not only has the Church never “defined” (by Crawford’s standards) the ends of marriage, she’s never even “defined” that marriage *has* ends, and she’s certainly never “defined” that secondary ends cannot be “superseded” by primary ends. But this may not actually be the word that Reverend Crawford is looking for. What we think he *might* be trying to say is that the secondary ends must be *subordinated* to the primary ends. Some English translations of *Casti Connubii*’s 59th paragraph read:

For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends, such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved³⁵.

But the context of this teaching is Pope Pius XI explaining *why sterile relations aren’t necessarily sinful*. So attempting to leverage a “subordinate” argument against periodic continence fails, since *Casti Connubii* itself regards sterile relations as sufficiently preserving the intrinsic nature of the act. Really, the fact that the encyclical explicitly acknowledges that sterile relations are *not* intrinsically sinful should be enough on its own to tell us that periodic continence is not included in Pope Pius XI’s condemnations.

³⁴ This is incomplete; the primary end of *marriage* as defined both by Canon Law and in Pope Pius XI’s *Casti Connubii* is dual: the procreation *and* education of children.

³⁵ This is not the standardized Denzinger translation, but the (1990) translation in the Pierian Press Encyclicals edition edited by Carlen, which is what the site papalencyclicals.net uses. In Denzinger, this section is translated as “For in matrimony itself, as in the practice of the conjugal right, secondary ends are also considered, such as mutual aid, the cultivation of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence, which spouses are by no means forbidden to attempt, provided the intrinsic nature of that act is preserved, and so its due ordering is towards its primary end” (Denz. 2241). Although a bit clunkier in English, Denzinger’s translation of this sentence is more precise and direct than the Pierian translation.

Which perhaps is why Reverend Crawford used the word “supersede,” since to supersede is extrinsic. If we say that something is superseded by something else, we’re usually using the word to indicate that something is *preferred* or *mentally prioritized* over something else (whereas subordinate indicates an actual intrinsic *ordering* of one thing to or under another). Given that all of Crawford’s explanations for why periodic continence is the same as contraception revolve *around* extrinsic factors like intentions, priorities, etc., it seems fair to suppose that he really is saying that the Church has “defined” that one cannot mentally prioritize one end of marital relations over another.

Which—aside from being simply *untrue*, however you cut it—is quite a long ways from arguing that periodic continence is *intrinsically against nature*! Mental prioritization is hardly the same thing as subordination, since a proper subordination in the context of *Casti Connubii* and the natural law relates to the nature of some *act*. We might mentally prioritize the taste of a meal over its nutritive qualities, and we may be motivated to eat the meal because of its smell or appearance rather than out of an Aristotelian appreciation for its participation in an intricate network of causality and ends designed to facilitate our sustenance. And in so doing, we would *never* be subordinating the primary end of consuming the meal to a secondary end. That would be just boilerplate human behavior. Now, if we eat the meal and then go to the bathroom and purge, we’re frustrating the primary end of consumption and truly subordinating it to a secondary end. And if we contracept, we are guilty of the same. But what Crawford describes is, at *worst*, an interior disposition of “not wanting to conceive *right now*.” Not a perversion of the *act itself*.

Avoidance versus Deliberate Frustration

Fr. Arthur Vermeersch was Pope Pius XI’s primary moral theology consultant and was selected by the pope to draft and ghost-write *Casti Connubii*³⁶. As such, he has a unique and

³⁶ What used to be common knowledge among Catholics may have been lost after the Conciliar revolt, but papal encyclicals are not typically written from start to finish by popes. For more on Vermeersch’s relationship with Pope Pius XI and authorship of *Casti Connubii*, see Ford & Kelly (1963, p. 34); Noonan Jr. (1965, pp. 424-25); & Noonan Jr. (1967, pp. 118-19)

distinguished competence and authority when teaching on these matters. In his (1932) *What is Marriage? A Catechism Arranged According to the Encyclical Casti Connubii*, Fr. Vermeersch explains that

As long as the [marital] act takes place normally it remains *objectively directed toward its primary end*, which is generation; and since, according to the maxim that the purpose of the law is not within the matter of the law (*finis legis non cadit sub legem*), *there is no obligation, while observing the law, to intend the end for which it was promulgated*, it follows that the act is not necessarily vitiated by deliberately choosing a certain time with the intention of avoiding conception. (p. 44, *emphasis added*)

And this only makes sense if we keep in mind the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic. Veermersch (1938) reminds us of this important distinction:

The due order among the purposes of marriage is *never* disturbed as long as the couple performs the copula in the natural way. Thus the intercourse always retains its natural tendency towards procreation, thereby safeguarding the purpose of the act (*finis operis*). (p. 86, *emphasis added*)

And again:

This subordination [secondary ends to primary ends] is preserved in as far as the carnal act is done in accordance with the law of nature. Carnal intercourse, correctly indulged, tends to procreation. If that does not result, it is not due to the couple copulating, but it is due to the order ordained by God, which decrees that all days are not fertile. (p. 87)

The “deliberate frustration” referenced in *Casti Connubii* isn’t a “deliberate not wanting to have children.” It’s a true and proper essential disruption, *by the agency of man*, of the very nature of the marital act. If we have repeated this point too frequently, it is only because there is probably no point more crucial to not just properly understanding periodic continence, but even understanding why *contraception* is wrong in the first place. Once this is firmly apprehended, the fact that periodic continence is *not* contraception should be self-evident.

The *difference* between someone who uses contraception and someone who uses periodic continence is considerable.

These two acts are no more similar than killing a thief is the same as reporting him to the authorities, even if both acts are motivated by wanting to see the criminal punished. Regarding the difference in moral quality between those who use contraception and those who lawfully use periodic continence, Fr. Dolan (1937) explained:

One is determined to gain his end, *whether or not* the laws of God and Nature are thwarted. There is no such sinful disposition in the mind of the man who exercises self-control except at periods of sterility. John Smith, who practises birth control, wants no children and will violate any law of God to obtain his end; Joseph Smith, who uses the sterile period, wants no children, but in order not to violate any law of God, will control himself except during the sterile period. No intelligent person can fail to see this distinction and difference. (p. 11, *emphasis added*)

What someone *actually does* in pursuit of an end factors in to whether or not one acts morally.

At the same time, we might anticipate a rebuttal that even if the acts are different, the disposition (of “not wanting children”) is sinful, and therefore periodic continence, since it satisfies this sinful disposition, is evil. But in truth, there is nothing *intrinsically* evil with “not wanting children” or “avoiding conception.” We understand that this claim will probably be seen as a violent attack on the sanctity of marriage, but if the reader will carefully consider the proposition, it is *obvious*:

- Priests and other religious avoid conception *all the time*
- Those called to the single state and those who are not yet married avoid conception *indefinitely*
- Those who are married avoid conception every *moment* *they’re not actively engaged in marital relations*

As we said: it is *obvious* that there is nothing *intrinsically* wrong with avoiding conception, otherwise clergy would be *morally obliged* to procreate, and as soon as children became sexually mature they’d be *morally obliged* to get married and start having

babies. So the question becomes, *under what conditions can conception be avoided*³⁷?

Affirmative and Negative Precepts

To better understand the degree to which a person is *obligated* to procreate, it is useful to know the difference between an affirmative and a negative precept. As usual, St. Thomas is insightful on the matter:

[Affirmative precepts] do not bind for always, although they are always binding; but they bind as to place and time according to other due circumstances, in respect of which human acts have to be regulated in order to be acts of virtue. (ST II-II, Q. 3, a. 2)

An old (1752) catechism by the Irish Bishop Thomas Burke explains it in the plainest language:

An *affirmative* precept commands us to do something, and a negative precept forbids us the doing of something. The first is called affirmative, because it is delivered in the *affirmative: do this or that*. The second is called negative, because it is commonly intimated by the negative: *do not this or that*. The difference between them is, that an affirmative precept obliges always, but not upon all occasions; but a negative precept obliges always, and upon all occasions. (pp. 189-90)

And he gives a useful example:

The affirmative precepts of Faith, Hope, Charity, &c. oblige us always, so as not to do any thing contrary to them, but yet we are not bound to practice these virtues upon all occasions, but only upon certain occasions when these precepts oblige us. But the negative precepts of *not* hating God, [etc.] Oblige us always and upon all occasions, because there is no time nor circumstances in which the acts of hating God or our neighbor are not criminal (p. 190)

Hopefully this more or less seems like common sense, merely adding some specific terms to what most Catholics already know. The moralist Fr. Slater (1925) puts it in terms that most traditionalist Catholics in the post-Vatican II era will be sensitive to:

³⁷ Keep in mind that under *no* conditions can the nature of the marital act itself be deliberately frustrated; we ask this question with it already in mind that we've established that *avoidance* is substantially different from *frustration*. No cause can ever excuse using contraceptives in marital relations.

A positive law ceases to be of obligation in a particular case if it becomes hurtful, or if it cannot be observed without serious inconvenience. (p. 69)

Mass attendance is an obvious example of an affirmative precept that many can relate to. We are *positively obliged* to attend Mass on Sundays, and if we don't, we sin. But in the present climate, there may not be a mass available to us—in which case, as everyone knows, no sin is committed by staying home. Even if there *is* a mass available to us, there are certain causes which would lift the precept: a mother may need to take care of a sick child, or weather may be so inclement as to make travel dangerous, etc. Every affirmative precept can, at least in principle, cease to bind under a certain condition. Whereas every negative precept, by its very nature, binds unceasingly. Pope Pius XI's teaching on the evils of contraception are a negative precept. The proscription against contraception holds unconditionally, in every circumstance, for every person (even clergy and the unmarried), forever.

But the command to procreate is an affirmative precept. Pope Pius XII, whom we quoted at the start of this chapter, said as much when he taught the lawfulness of periodic continence:

There are serious motives, such as those often mentioned in the so-called medical, eugenic, and social “indications”, that can *exempt* for a long time, perhaps even the whole duration of the marriage, *from the positive and obligatory carrying out of the act.* (Catholic Almanac, p. 84)

And again, when discussing the morality of periodic continence in greater detail:

The mere fact that the couple do not offend the nature of the act...would not be sufficient in itself to guarantee the rectitude of *intention* and the unobjectionable morality of the *motives* themselves. The reason for this is that marriage *obliges* to a state of life which, while conferring certain rights also imposes the *fulfillment of a positive work* in regard to the married state itself. In such a case, one can apply the general principle that a *positive fulfillment may be omitted when serious reasons [gravi motivi]*, independent from the good will of those obliged by it, show that this action is not opportune, or prove that a similar

demand cannot reasonably be made of human nature.

(*Catholic Almanac*, p. 84, *emphasis added*)

We've emphasized how Pope Pius XII's description is strongly couched in an understanding of procreation as an affirmative precept and how in his discussion of possible *abuses* of periodic continence he mentions only factors extrinsic to the marital act (intentions, motives, etc.)³⁸.

It is beyond the scope of this work to exhaustively delineate when periodic continence might be lawful. Pope Pius XII provides a general guide: it is lawful when grave reasons make procreation inadvisable. Typical examples that authors often offer include grave danger to the mother's health, or imminent poverty and an inability to provide for one's family if another child were to be born at that time. What all the reasons for legitimate practice of periodic continence tend have in common is that they tend to describe *direct threats to one's state in life*, i.e., to one's vocation. It might be useful to keep in mind what was mentioned earlier via footnote viz. the end of marriage actually being dual: the procreation and *education* of children. With that in mind, we can anticipate that situations might arise where the primary end of marriage is threatened by procreation (e.g., a mother can hardly educate her children if she's *dead* or if another child would literally make the family homeless, etc.). And priests are of course not infallible in suggesting periodic continence to couples, and can only make (or not) make cautious recommendations based on what is known about the situation and what is known about the couple.

It seems certain that the *Novus Ordo* practice of "NFP" is in violent contradiction to Pope Pius XII's guidelines. The idea that NFP can be practiced indiscriminately as a matter of course, or as something that Catholics "just do" is not only *absent* from Pius XII's (or any of his theologians') teachings, it's actually *condemned* as we've just seen. So too does the *Novus Ordo* practice of indiscriminately publicly disseminating information on periodic continence—even *requiring* married couples *carte blanche* to learn

³⁸ Here it is worth pointing out that *even if sinfully abused*, periodic continence doesn't "become" the sin of contraception, since it *still* doesn't entail an intrinsic corruption of the nature of the act. Sinfully abusing periodic continence would be a sin against *marriage* rather than nature.

how to use it—fly in direct contradiction of the Church’s great caution in actually teaching and recommending the method. But these are abuses *a la* the ones described earlier by Father Calkins and Archbishop Murray, and while scandalous, certainly don’t inform the intrinsic morality of periodic continence any more than the widespread practice of deliberate drunkenness informs the morality of drinking *per se*.

The Control of Man

Still, one might say that whether there are legitimate reasons or not for using periodic continence, the idea of *planning* births at all is in stark contradiction to a docile submission to God’s will. Reverend Crawford certainly seems to argue this when he claims that periodic continence is sinful because it “puts the control of procreation in the hands of man” (p. 8). He says that

It is absolutely wrong to take the place of God with life and death. Married Couples must be surrendered to God’s perfect will and not plan when they will or will not conceive a child, but instead leave all to God and God alone. (p. 11)

Like earlier when he implied without qualification that it is wrong to *avoid* conception, this argument suffers from a very serious lack of qualification, and without any qualification, these contentions lead to proper absurdities.

The claim that it is “absolutely wrong” to “take the place of God” in matters of life and death is *itself* absolutely wrong. We already know that St. Paul teaches that the state bears the sword not in vain (Rom. 13:4), and that the Catholic Church has repeatedly throughout the centuries upheld the intrinsic morality of the death penalty. We also know that the Church has consistently taught that deaths brought about in defense of life are not murders. If it is “absolutely wrong” to influence death, then the rot runs much deeper than baptism of desire or periodic continence—it goes all the way back to the New Testament!

As far as taking control over *life*, the claim is equally wrong. The axiom offered by Crawford is harmful if taken seriously. It would make all medical care immoral. It would make every intervention to *preserve* life immoral. Have an illness? Too bad, can’t play God, don’t take any medicine. Is your child hanging on to a windowsill by his fingernails? Too bad, can’t play God, don’t

interfere. Have a complicated pregnancy? Too bad, can't play God, don't intervene. Now, we're sure (or at least we certainly hope!) that Reverend Crawford wouldn't recommend that you let your children fall to their death, that you let home invaders have their way with your family, or that you watch an in uterine baby rot away without ever stepping in to *do* something about it. But if he wouldn't recommend these things, then he's going to have to ditch the bogus claim that it's *absolutely wrong* to have *any* influence over matters of life and death.

On the other hand, maybe Reverend Crawford really *would* make these absurd recommendations. After all, he implies that St. Dominic would have *opposed using fertility knowledge to increase the chances of conceiving* (p. 11). So his condemnations don't just extend to knowledge of *not* having children, but to *having* them, too. We are left to wonder whether he condemns the use of knowledge and reason altogether!

Providence

And of course he gives no attempt at even *explaining* why we must act in this way, but merely asserts it by appealing to Divine Providence. He says "there have been many Saints whose mothers have died at birth, yet that was the Perfect Will of God" (p. 11). Well, yes, but a statement like this seems to reveal a completely perverted sense of Providence. *Everything* that happens only happens in accordance with the will of God, permissive or positive. God directly wills, or refrains from directly willing, every thing that ever has happened or will happen. Walker (1911) states the Catholic doctrine plainly and simply: "God directs all, even evil and sin itself, to the final end for which the universe was created" (§1). This includes the murder of millions of unborn children. It includes the revolution at Vatican II. It includes miscarried children, it includes millions of children never conceived owed to contraception, it includes everything from atom bombs to stubbed toes. *That* God allowed something to happen doesn't tell us that whatever happened is morally good! Plainly, a great many things that God allows to happen are *not*. It is God's *will* that there is an ongoing genocide of the unborn, but it is not *good* that this is happening; it is God's *will* that virtually the entire world lost the faith after Vatican II but it is not *good* that this happened—so on and so forth.

Trusting in Providence does not mean dismissing all legitimate means of avoiding danger, harm, or death (spiritual or physical) to oneself or others. There is an old moral story that goes something like this: a man lived in an area where a flood was imminent, and when the evacuation order sounded he said “don’t worry, God will provide.” Days passed and he had moved upstairs because the floodwaters consumed the lower level of his home; a rescue team in a boat came by his window and he said “move along, God will provide.” The water rose even further and he was on his roof now; a helicopter descended to rescue him and he ushered it away saying, “I’ll be fine, God will provide.” The man drowned to death and when he met God at the Judgment he said “What gives? I believed you would provide!” To which God replied, “I sent you an evacuation order, a boat, and even a helicopter, dummy.”

Presumption

When we talk about Crawford’s silly ideas in the abstract, it’s glaringly obvious that they’re not true in any *general* sense. But they’re not true if we narrow their focus and apply them specifically to married life, either. Marriage and procreation are fundamentally *planned* activities. There is hardly as important and morally significant an act that most people will ordinarily engage in than the bringing forth of new life. Given the strict *responsibility* placed on parents, Fr. Wayne (1936) argued

Contraception is commonly called birth-control; an unfortunate term, since birth-control as such obviously is a reasonable and necessary thing. Catholics would be the last to deny that the human reason should control as far as possible such an important matter as the coming of new life into the world, with its added responsibilities to the parents. In point of fact, the very institution of marriage is a method of birth-control, since it limits procreation to those conditions in which a child will be cared for. (p. 65)

We appreciate that Fr. Wayne was not content to allow the liberals and Neo-Malthusians to control the linguistic landscape. Language is one of the first things to be abused and co-opted by cultural revolutionaries, and Fr. Wayne takes the objective approach rather than being intimidated by liberal phraseology. And what he’s stating is actually obvious. The natural and divine

order *itself* imposes certain controls on procreation. The institution of marriage, the Church's impediments to marriage, the biological rhythms, etc. All of these point to the *seriousness* of bringing new life into the world, and the *grave care* required by those whose vocation calls them to procreate.

Trusting in God is *not* the same as failing to appreciate and respond to the gravities of one's responsibilities on the presumption that "God will provide." As Wayne says elsewhere: "procreation cannot be undertaken without thought and control; trust in Providence does not mean banking on a very doubtful future" (p. 67). What Crawford calls "trust in Providence" is much closer to *presumption* than it is to something pious. As Aquinas explains,

It is vicious and sinful, as being *contrary to the natural order*, that any one should assume to do what is above his power: and this is what is meant by presumption, as its very name shows (ST, II-II, Q. 130, a.1, *emphasis added*).

Presumption is an especially heinous sin, and is numbered against those sins which are called "sins against the Holy Ghost," when it manifests in contempt for divine justice "through *inordinate confidence* in the Divine mercy" (ST, II-II, Q. 130, a. 2, *emphasis added*). There is nothing humble, wholesome, or virtuous about an inordinate confidence in God's mercy. Slater explains that presumption is actually a vice derived from *pride* (p. 98). And with explicit reference to periodic continence, Fr. Giese contends that

Those who find it advisable or even imperative to limit or avoid conception would be guilty of presumption if they continued to indulge in regular marital union saying 'God will provide' when legitimate means of avoiding harm or disaster are afforded in their case, by permanent or even periodic continence. (p. 86)

Those with serious reasons for avoiding conception that proceed with the attitude that "God will provide" while dismissing legitimate means for trying to avert the dangers presented to their family or self are *not* trusting in Providence, they are *tempting* it with presumption.

Casti Connubii Quotes Analysis

Any discussion about marital morality will necessarily include a discussion of *Casti Connubii*. We have already covered

considerable ground in this chapter in our discussion of the encyclical's teaching. By this point, its proper meaning should be clear, and just as clear should be the fact that it doesn't support Reverend Crawford's arguments.

Still, as we draw this chapter to a close, we think it appropriate to directly engage some of the *Casti Connubii* material he quotes. Not because there's anything left to prove, but because it is important for the reader to have a preview of how Reverend Crawford manipulated his quotes of the encyclical to better support his arguments. This quick exposition won't focus on the doctrine of the matter, since we've already done that. We're simply going to show that Reverend Crawford's mistakes go beyond simply *misunderstanding* the material he uses; he *misrepresents* it, too. We will present table summaries comparing the quotes, and readers may wish to consult pages 8-9 in Appendix C if they want to follow along.

Consider the first *Casti Connubii* quote he uses to prove that periodic continence is against the Divine and Natural laws:

To take away the natural and primeval right of marriage, or in **any way to circumscribe the chief purpose of marriage established in the beginning by the authority of God, is not within the power of any law of man.** . . . Thus the child holds the first place among the blessing of marriage. Clearly the Creator of the human race Himself, who because of His kindness wished to use men as helpers in propagating life, taught this in Paradise, when He instituted marriage, saying to our first parents, and through them to all spouses: 'Increase and Multiply and fill the earth' (Gen. 1: 28). (p 8, **emphasis retained**)

Following on Reverend Crawford's assertion that periodic continence takes control away from God and reverses the natural order, this quote reads like a statement of principle. As though the pope were stating simply and clearly that both periodic continence and contraception are the same thing, because both "circumscribe the chief purpose of marriage." But it only reads like that because it's been removed from its context and had new context added. The following table shows the differences:

Reverend Crawford's (first) <i>Casti Connubii</i> Quote	<i>Casti Connubii</i>
<p>To take away the natural and primeval right of marriage, or in any way to circumscribe the chief purpose of marriage established in the beginning by the authority of God, is not within the power of any law of man. . . .[He cuts out two complete paragraphs here. Pope Pius XI has moved on to a different thought by the start of the next sentence] Thus the child holds the first place among the blessing of marriage. Clearly the Creator of the human race Himself, who because of His kindness wished to use men as helpers in propagating life, taught this in Paradise, when He instituted marriage, saying to our first parents, and through them to all spouses: 'Increase and Multiply and fill the earth' (Gen. 1: 28).</p>	<p>It is now well established that truly legitimate authority has the power by law and so is compelled by duty to restrain, to prevent, and to punish base marriages, which are opposed to reason and to nature; but since a matter is involved which follows upon human nature itself, that is no less definitely established which Our predecessor, Leo XIII, of happy memory, plainly taught: "In choosing a state of life there is no doubt but that it is within the power and discretion of individuals to prefer either one of two: either to adopt the counsel of Jesus Christ with respect to virginity, or to bind himself with the bonds of matrimony. To take away the natural and primeval right of marriage, or in any way to circumscribe the chief purpose of marriage established in the beginning by the authority of God, 'Increase and multiply' [Gen. 1:28], is not within the power of any law of man." (Denz. 2226)</p>

Once we add back in everything Reverend Crawford cut out, we can see that:

- This quote not only has nothing to do with periodic continence, it doesn't even have anything to do with *contraception*. In fact, Pope Pius XI doesn't begin to speak about contraception for another forty-plus paragraphs, more than five thousand words later (for perspective, there

are chapters in *this* book that aren't even five thousand words).

- The first sentence of Crawford's quote is actually Pope Pius XI merely quoting Pope Leo XIII, and the "right" of marriage he mentions is the *right to choose who you marry*.
- The "law of man" is not some broad concept that could include periodic continence or even contraception, but literally and specifically *laws made by humans* to govern marriage.
 - To that end, the whole *point* of the teachings Crawford is pulling from is that human laws *do* have a certain amount of control over marriage
- The second sentence of Crawford's quote doesn't actually follow from the first at all. Pope Pius XI has moved on from his discussion of the state and the Church's powers and limits to regulate marriage, and moved on to a discussion solely and explicitly of what God has invested in marriage.

Reverend Crawford's misrepresentation of the meaning, context, and significance of this quote then reverberates throughout the rest of the quotes he uses, which are naturally read "in light" of the first quote. So he provides his next quote which mentions "this criminal abuse"—which the reader will naturally suppose refers to supplanting God's laws with "the laws of man" but in fact "this criminal abuse" refers very *directly* to the deliberate frustration of the marital act. This is obvious if we just don't remove the lead sentence like Crawford did.

Crawford's (second) <i>Casti Connubii</i> Quote	<i>Casti Connubii</i>
<p>Indeed, some vindicate themselves for this criminal abuse on the ground that they are tired of children and wish merely to fulfill their desires without the consequent burden; others on the ground that they can neither observe continence, nor because of difficulties of the mother or of family circumstances cannot have offspring... Any use of the marriage act, in the exercise of which it is designedly deprived of its natural power of procreating life, infringes on the law of God and of nature, and those who have committed any such act are stained with the guilt of serious sin.</p>	<p>Let us discuss the offspring, which some have the audacity to call the troublesome burden of marriage, and which they declare should be studiously avoided not by honorable continence (permitted even in matrimony when both spouses consent), but by <i>frustration of the natural act</i>. Indeed, some vindicate themselves for this criminal abuse on the ground that they are tired of children and wish merely to fulfill their desires without the consequent burden; others on the ground that they can neither observe continence, nor because of difficulties of the mother or of family circumstances cannot have offspring. <i>But surely no reason, not even the gravest, can bring it about that what is intrinsically against nature becomes in accord with nature, and honorable.</i> Since, moreover, the conjugal act by its very nature is destined for the generating of offspring, those who in the exercise of it deliberately deprive it of its natural force and power, act contrary to nature, and do something that is shameful and intrinsically bad. (Denz. 2239, <i>emphasis added</i>)</p>

Not only does Reverend Crawford remove the sentence which explains what this “criminal abuse” *is*, he removes a sentence from the middle of the paragraph (*italicized in the table*) to help avoid any *reference* to what it actually is. And *then* he adds that removed sentence back in as a “third” quote, as though it follows in sequence from the others, making Pope Pius’s reference to that which is “intrinsically against nature” refer to this “criminal abuse” which Crawford has implied relates to some broad notion of the “laws of man” supplanting the laws of God. This whole sequence of *Casti Connubii* quotes is just a clever farce.

Concluding Thoughts

This chapter has been uncharacteristically long, and we have dealt here with a topic seemingly unrelated to what we’ve been discussing throughout (justification, baptism of desire, etc.). But there is an intimate thematic relationship between the errors we’ve witnessed with regard to justification and those we’ve witnessed with regard to the Church’s teaching on marital relations. In both cases, the errors are driven fundamentally by a disregard for how the ordinary magisterium illumines Catholic teaching. It is truly *only* by disregarding *everything* the Church has ever said about *Casti Connubii* and periodic continence that one can maintain the sort of arguments that Crawford is advancing. As we said back in Chapter One, when we ignore the ordinary magisterium we ignore the *vehicles of doctrinal explanation*. And that is, simply put, a very stupid thing to do.

And that’s not the only similarity. We’ve seen how far astray a person can go in their understanding if they disdain (or even just ignore) the fundamental scholastic principles that underpin doctrinal explanations. Scholastic philosophy is one of the Church’s richest treasures, and since its development by St. Thomas it has permeated Catholic teaching at all levels. As Pope St. Pius X said, this philosophy isn’t *optional*.

In this chapter we also saw more evidence of a tendency we discussed in the last chapter: Even aside from ignoring the ordinary magisterium and the Church’s philosophical tenets, when Reverend Crawford *doesn’t* ignore something, he struggles to accurately represent it. We saw this with Archbishop Murray’s

letter, which was not only plainly *mis-read* by Crawford but read without any regard for its context whatsoever. We saw this same disregard with *Casti Connubii*, which could only be presented with excessive manipulations in order to support his arguments. In the next chapter, we'll further explore this theme and see the shockingly unscrupulous lengths he'll go to when manipulating content to make it seem like it supports his views.

Summary

- We have shown that Reverend Crawford is perfectly cognizant of the fact that he is rejecting Holy Office teachings which Pope Pius IX said Catholics are bound to accept.
- We've discussed the history of periodic continence, and shown that from the earliest moment the Church was aware of it she affirmed its morality, and that any and all "prohibitions" on periodic continence were only prohibitions on the scope of *publicity* Catholic teachers were allowed to give it. It is *that* which Archbishop Murray's letter decried, not the morality of the system as such.
- But we also dove much deeper. We looked at *Casti Connubii* and at what the Church's teachers have said about periodic continence, including what its ghost-writer Fr. Vermeersch said about it, and there's simply no controversy whatsoever as to whether or not it can be lawful.
- We explored in basic depth that *Casti Connubii* specifically condemns that which is *intrinsically* against nature, while showing that *extrinsic* considerations (like motives, subjective purposes, intentions, etc.,) have no bearing on the nature of an act whatsoever, and that even *if* periodic continence was used unlawfully, it would be a sin against marriage, *not* against nature.
- But periodic continence is certainly capable of being used lawfully. If the Church's continued affirmation (including Pope Pius XI's affirmation, only a year and a half after publishing *Casti Connubii*) of it was not enough proof of this, we discussed how procreation is an *affirmative* precept, whilst the proscription against contraception is a

negative precept; the former does not bind for all people in all situations, while the latter does. Catholics are *not* bound under all circumstances to procreate, they are merely bound under all circumstances to not *frustrate* the *nature* of the marital act.

- It is of course possible that periodic continence can be abused, but abuses are just that—*abuses*— and the Church has always been very solicitous in guarding against those abuses.
- We also considered Reverend Crawford's claims that periodic continence in some way is contrary to providence, because man cannot have control over life and death—we took this idea and teased out the truly absurd conclusions it leads to, and showed that what he calls trust in providence is *much* closer to the sin of presumption than it is to a legitimately pious trust in God.
- And finally, we engaged the "quotes" he provided from *Casti Connubii* and showed that when he is not fundamentally misunderstanding them, he is manipulating them to say things which, when the context is added back in, they clearly never said.

Chapter Six: On Context: Or, Fraudulent Material and Vain Rhetoric Passed off as “Catholic Teaching”

Introduction

By this point we have more or less concluded our defense of baptism of desire and periodic continence. What still remains, though, is to provide a thorough commentary and criticism of Reverend Crawford’s scholarship. Scholarship refers to an author’s ability to reliably and accurately represent the material he is using. As such, it directly reflects on an author’s credibility and trustworthiness.

Scholarship is especially important when one’s argument touches on the Catholic faith. Catholics are *authority*-based, so any argument intended to sway Catholics should be one that is well documented and supported by the Church and her pastors. And given that there is nothing more important to human knowledge *than* the Catholic faith, the burden of sound scholarship intensifies in this context. To misrepresent, alter, or otherwise adjust source material for one’s own purpose is particularly heinous when that source material *is* Catholic teaching.

Unfortunately, Reverend Crawford has done exactly that, and with startling consistency throughout his Untitled Booklet. We have already seen a preview of some of these scholarly errors—in Chapter Four we noticed that he not only mis-cited Church Fathers, but read them without any regard for their historical context and even read them without any regard for intertextual context. And in Chapter Five we saw how he lifted parts of *Casti Connubii* out of context, gave them a new context, and then stitched them together to make a new argument.

In this chapter we have selected a variety of additional errors to analyze. These errors are of varying significance. Reverend Crawford misrepresents material in many different ways, so we hope to provide examples of each “type” of misrepresentation so that readers can have an idea of what to look out for if he ever publishes another booklet. Some misrepresentations are seemingly innocuous, like attributing a quote to the wrong author. Others are subtle but decisively misleading in effect, like taking a quote to be a statement about

baptism when the author’s purpose for writing had nothing at all to do with baptism. And still other misrepresentations are wholly fraudulent, removing crucial context or even just outright making things up.

This is by no means an *exhaustive* critique of his scholarship, and we’ve refrained from offering a *complete* criticism simply because that would require its own book.

Inattentiveness and Mis-citations: *Unam Sanctam* and St. Thomas

Before getting into the more offensive misrepresentations, we’ll start off with a few “softball” mistakes. These mainly involve Reverend Crawford not citing his material correctly. Some might misunderstand citations as being only necessary for “skeptics.” But even the most ancient of the Church Fathers cited their sources, and it is the custom of ecumenical councils, papal encyclicals, and all of the theologians to cite theirs as well. Having a citation serves multiple purposes: it testifies to the fact that the author actually read the material that he should have read in order to have an informed opinion on the matter he’s discussing. It also provides the reader a way to verify that the quoted content is represented accurately and contextually. And probably most importantly it provides the reader an opportunity to *learn more*. If an author makes some claim or another and then supports it with a citation to an authority, it is ideal for the reader to be able to then go read that authority to deepen their understanding.

An incorrect citation is usually the result of inattentiveness to one’s source material, or a lack of rigor in research. To that end, we see Reverend Crawford misattributing *Unam Sanctam* (1302) multiple times. He thrice cites it as being written by Pope Pius IX (pp. 8, 17, & 50). But Pius IX lived almost six hundred years after *Unam Sanctam*, so we’re really not sure how this mistake could be made so consistently. He once *almost* cites it correctly, attributing it to “Pope Boniface” (pp. 27 & 40). *Unam Sanctam* was written by Pope Boniface VIII (Denz. 468-9).

Another incorrect citation is a quote about invincible ignorance on page 31 which he attributes merely to “St. Thomas Aquinas.” St. Thomas is so important to Catholic theology that he

literally has his own citation convention which authors are expected to use when referring to his work (Crawford is clearly aware of this, since he actually uses that convention later on page 34). So we’re not sure why he wouldn’t use that convention with the quote on page 31. Perhaps because St. Thomas never *said* the quote on page 31. That quote is *verbatim* from Fr. Michael Mueller’s (1875) adapted *Familiar Explanation of Christian Doctrine* (p. 108). Maybe Reverend Crawford was just going by memory on that one.

What’s the Point? Pope St. Leo the Great

Reverend Crawford cites Pope St. Leo the Great’s teaching at the Council of Chalcedon several times throughout his work (pp. 4, 27, 41, & 49). The context of the teaching³⁹ concerns the monastic Eutyches, who in denouncing the heresies of Nestorius, originated a unique flavor of monophysitism, denying that Christ was man (Chapman, 1909). So right away the context tells us that the pope isn’t teaching us *about* baptism, but about Christ’s nature.

The small section Crawford picked out is part of a larger section where Leo uses baptism as an instructional metaphor to explain the union of Christ’s natures. Christ’s flesh was real, and he suffered as man, in this real flesh. His body was real matter, yet in undivided unity with the Godhead. St. Leo uses the sacrament of Baptism as a comparison, showing that it involves real matter. The water of baptism, the matter in the sacrament, is in undivided unity with the spirit of sanctification and blood of redemption in the sacrament when it is properly conferred and received.

³⁹ This material is actually from a letter Pope St. Leo wrote to the bishop Flavian; it was read at Chalcedon but existed prior to it.

Crawford’s Quote of Pope St. Leo the Great	Pope St. Leo the Great’s Letter to Bishop Flavian/Council of Chalcedon
<p>“There are three that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one” (1 John 5:8). This means the Spirit of sanctification, and the blood of redemption, and the water of Baptism, which three things are one and remain undivided, and not one of them is separated from union with the others.” (Emphasis retained, cited by Crawford as “Council of Chalcedon I”).</p>	<p>Let [Eutyches, the heretic] listen also to the blessed Apostle Peter proclaiming that the sanctification of the Spirit effected by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. And let him read attentively the same Apostle’s words... [quotes from Pet. 1, 2; Pet. 1. 13; 1 John]... the spirit, that is, of sanctification, and the blood of redemption, and the water of baptism, which three are one, and continue inseparable, and no one of them is severed from its connexion with the others: because by this faith the Catholic Church lives, by this makes increase, that in Christ Jesus, neither the manhood is believed without very Godhead, nor the Godhead without very manhood (Trans. Heurtely, 1885, pp. 27-8, see also Denz. 143-4).</p>

So the first problem with this quote, as Crawford uses it, is that he’s simply selected a sentence that sounds good for his case without any regard for its actual *purpose*. But even if the quote existed in a vacuum, it would not make any sense to interpret its sense as an assertion that none of these things could ever exist without the other. What of St. John the Baptist’s baptisms, which occurred before there even was a redemption? What of baptism simulated through the withholding of intention or use of incorrect formula? The water is still connected to the redemption but there is no sanctification.⁴⁰ These are the silly conclusions we are left with, though, when the whole purpose of Pope Leo’s quote is set aside.

⁴⁰ And Crawford even *argued* this very thing earlier, so how can he read Pope St. Leo this way?

Crawford gives a similar reading to another quote he uses from St. Leo. This quote is cited as coming from “Epistle XV: 10” (cited in Crawford pp. 21, 33, & 53). This citation is incorrect, although it’s pretty close. The material is from Epistle 15 (XV) but it’s St. Leo’s 11th chapter/paragraph, written in *response* to the Priscillians 10th error.

Which naturally brings us to the context of the letter. Epistle 15 is a lengthy letter to Bishop Turribius in Spain regarding Priscillianism, a sort of gnostic, quasi-Manichaean heresy in Patristic Iberia (Healy, 1911). The quoted material is in response to the Priscillian error that souls are conceived of the Holy Ghost and exist in some spiritual hyper-astrological realm prior to being infused in the human body (the Priscillians had bizarre beliefs). The quote Crawford has taken is St. Leo leveraging a proof from scripture to combat *that*. What Crawford provides is not even a full *sentence*, let alone does he retain the greater context of and motivation for St. Leo’s letter:

Crawford’s (Second) Quote of Pope St. Leo	Pope St. Leo the Great’s Epistle XV, Ch. 11: to Bishop Turribius concerning the Priscillians
“Since by the transgression of the first man, the whole progeny of the human race is vitiated; no one can be freed from the condition of the old man except by the sacrament of the Baptism of Christ.” (Cited by Crawford as “Epistle XV: 10”).	This blasphemous fable [of the Priscillianists, that human souls existed in some ethereal domain before being infused by God into the body at conception] they have woven for themselves out of many persons' errors : but all of them the Catholic Faith cuts off from union with its body, persistently and truthfully proclaiming that men's souls did not exist until they were breathed into their bodies, and that they were not there implanted by any other than God, who is the creator both of

	the souls and of the bodies. And because through the transgression of the first man the whole stock of the human race was tainted, no one can be set free from the state of the old Adam save through Christ's sacrament of baptism, in which there are no distinctions between the re-born, as says the Apostle [Gal. 3:27-8]. What then have the course of the stars to do with it, or the devices of destiny? What the changing state of mundane things and their restless diversity? (Trans. Lett Feltoe, 1895).
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If we want to know what the Church teaches about baptism or baptism of desire, we should learn from teaching efforts that are, well, *about baptism or baptism of desire*. Baptism is not *the point* of either of Pope St. Leo’s letters. In neither letter does the pope even *obliquely* attempt to provide lessons on baptism. Reverend Crawford just gathers ancillary mentions, plucking them out of purpose and context to support an agenda— which is something he should not have to do if his doctrine were as obvious and perennial as he claims.

“Only One” Problem—Additions to Pope Clement V’s Teaching

A quote from Pope Clement V at the Council of Vienne (1311-12) is cited by Reverend Crawford ubiquitously (pp. 5, 15, 25, 27, 33, 35, 41, & 49). He tells us it reads:

Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is “one God and one faith” (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Denz. 482) (Crawford, p. 5, *emphasis* retained).

The “only” problem is that the word “only” is Reverend Crawford’s own addition. Pope Clement never used it.

Now suppose he’d actually quoted this teaching “as it reads” instead of by embellishing it. Quoting from Vienne would be hypocritically selective, and the more and more context one adds into Pope Clement’s quote, the worse it looks for Reverend Crawford:

Crawford’s Quote of Pope Clement V at the Council of Vienne	Pope Clement V at the Council of Vienne
Besides, <i>only one</i> Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is “one God and one faith” (Eph. 4:5), <i>which is celebrated in water</i> in the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. (<i>emphasis retained</i> , Cited by Crawford as Denz. 482)	Besides, one baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all just as "one God and one faith" [Eph. 4:5], which celebrated in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit we believe to be commonly the perfect remedy for salvation for adults as for children. [Some have argued that baptized infants have sin remitted but not grace or virtues conferred] We, however, considering the general efficacy of the death of Christ, which through baptism is applied equally to all the baptized, with the approval of the sacred council, consider the second opinion to be preferred, which says that forming grace and virtue are conferred on children as on adults, as more probable,

	more consonant and more in agreement with the words of the saints and the modern doctors of theology. (Denz. 482-83)
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As before with Pope St. Leo the Great, Reverend Crawford has missed *the point*. Pope Clement’s reference to “one baptism” isn’t him teaching against baptism of desire. The point of contention is whether or not baptized *infants* have the three theological virtues infused as habits. And Pope Clement says that *they do*, since the baptism administered to infants is the same as the baptism administered to adults. He’s not teaching that there’s no baptism of desire, he’s teaching that water baptism received by infants *is the same as water baptism received by adults*.

And that’s not all. Notice Pope Clement’s *reasoning* for favoring this doctrine. He approves of it because it is “more consonant and more in agreement with the words of the saints *and the modern doctors of theology*.” Not because, as Reverend Crawford might put it, “The Supreme Court of the Church has spoken.” Pope Clement’s rule of faith is antithetical to Crawford’s. He has no business relying on Pope Clement to support what he has to say. They don’t even agree on what counts for Catholic teaching.

Franken-Augustine: Reassembling the Doctor of Grace

Next up is a five-sentence paragraph which Crawford cites as coming from St. Augustine “On John XIII, tract VII” (cited in Crawford, p. 38). This quote is an irreverent chop-job. For starters, it’s not from “John XIII, tract VII” because there *is* no “John XIII, tract VII” in Augustine’s corpus. But that’s a minor point, the real problem with this “quote” is that of the five sentences, only *two* are even from the same work! This whole “quote” is just a bunch of sentences strung together from different places. We will summarize what our research uncovered as the “real” sources of each sentence⁴¹. Readers may also refer to the table on the next page for a visual representation.

⁴¹ After completing our research on this quote, we realized that Griff Ruby (2008) performed similar research, albeit a slightly different “version” of it. Ruby found the quote

The source of the first sentence has been very difficult to track down. Writing for Saint Benedict’s Center, Brian Kelly (2011) asserts that the first sentence is from Frits Van Der Meer’s (1961) book *Augustine the Bishop* but it is unclear if the sentence is actually a quote from Augustine or a quote from Van Der Meer. Without access to the title we can’t be sure what the context of the sentence is, or whether or not Augustine actually said it.

The second and third sentences can be found in various places, probably most notably in Jurgens’ patrology set, *The Faith of the Early Fathers*. Jurgens says that the material came from a combination of Migne’s Patrologies (which are a reprint of the Maurist) and also Lambot, although he doesn’t specify which material came from which source, and in either event Migne and Lambot are in Greek and Latin so they’d hardly be of much use for our purposes—besides, we doubt Reverend Crawford dove that deep just to fake a quote. Now, the fourth sentence cannot be sourced at all; it is often quoted by anonymous Internet users as coming from Jurgens, but it doesn’t. We’ve been unable to track down this sentence in any patrology or collection of St. Augustine’s work. If it exists *at all*, it certainly doesn’t exist as part of the two sentences found in Jurgens.

The last sentence of the quote is from St. Augustine’s commentary on John Chapter 3, Tractate 13, paragraph 7. This is the only sentence for which we are able to provide any considerable context. For ease of summary and illustration, we present the following table: Note that for the last sentence of the paragraph, context makes it clear that St. Augustine is referring to *prideful* and *disingenuous* catechumens.

from Richard Ibranyi, which is possibly where Reverend Crawford got it—or not. It’s a quote that’s “made the rounds” on the Internet, with everyone offering different versions of and citations for it.

Patristic Scavenger Hunt			
Crawford quoted St. Augustine as saying...		The quote is actually from...	Actual Quote with context:
First Sentence:	“How many sincere catechumens die unbaptized, and are thus lost forever.	No one knows, possibly a 1961 book called <i>Augustine The Bishop</i> by a Fr. Van Der Meer. May or may not actually be the words of Augustine.	None
Second and Third Sentence:	When we come into the sight of God, no one will say, ‘Why was this man led by God’s direction to be baptized, while that man, although he lived properly as a catechumen, was killed in a sudden disaster and not baptized? Look for rewards, and you will find nothing but punishment.	Jurgens, who cites Migne and Lambot, although without distinguishing from where each segment came.	When we come into the sight of God, no one will say, ‘Why was this man led by God’s direction to be baptized, while that man, although he lived properly as a catechumen, was killed in a sudden disaster and not baptized?... Look for deserts, and you will find nothing but punishment. Look for grace: “O, sublimity of riches (5)!” Peter denies, the thief believes. “O, sublimity of riches!” (Jurgens 1970, vol. 3, p.

			26, §1496, all ellipses retained])
Crawford quoted St. Augustine as saying...		The quote is actually from...	Actual Quote with context:
Fourth Sentence:	Of what use would repentance be, if Baptism did not follow?	No one knows.	None
Fifth Sentence:	No matter what progress a catechumen may make, he still carries the burden of iniquity, and it is not taken away until he has been baptized.”	On John 3, tract 13, §7	...Lest any man, arrogating to himself that he has abundance of some particular grace, should disdain to be baptized with the baptism of the Lord. For whatever the catechumen's proficiency, he still carries the load of his iniquity: it is not forgiven him until he shall have come to baptism. Just as the people Israel were not rid of the Egyptians until they had come to the Red Sea, so no man is rid of the pressure of sins until he has come to the font of baptism. (On John 3, Tractate 13, §7).

As is obvious, this “quote” is *not a quote*. Ironically though, the illegitimacy of this “quote” actually works in Reverend Crawford’s favor. Only a few pages earlier he replied to Bishop Pivarunas’s question about how St. Thomas’s work could be officially approved by the Church as the norm of priestly formation when he erred on what was necessary for salvation (Crawford pp. 33-4; Appendix A, Q. 15). Crawford’s explanation included, in part, this reference to Pope Alexander VIII’s (1690) Holy Office condemnation of the Jansenists:

[Condemned proposition of the Jansenists, no. 30] When anyone finds a doctrine clearly established in Augustine, he can absolutely hold and teach it, disregarding any bull of the pope. (this is condemned) (Crawford, p. 34).

Crawford’s point being that if the pope issues a bull about something, you can’t argue against it by quoting a Doctor of the Church⁴². But why is he even providing the fraudulent quote from St. Augustine in the first place? As a way of arguing against Pope Gregory XVI’s canonization *bull* of St. Alphonsus Liguori!⁴³ But we suppose that Pope Alexander’s condemnation—if it “reads as its written”—only applies to those who resist papal bulls by holding to things St. Augustine *actually said*.

A “Foolish” Omission: Pope St. Innocent I

Another quote put on the chopping block is a quote attributed to Pope St. Innocent I’s Epistle 29. Reverend Crawford says that Pope St. Innocent “declared ‘That the rewards of eternal life are given without baptism is very foolish’” (pp. 5, 42, & 52). Which is strange, since popes do not *declare*, in the relevant sense, *anything* in their epistles. Epistles are letters, usually to individuals. We advise our readers to be wary of loose language like this—something Crawford does elsewhere, too—since it (wrongly) implies that the statement might have an *ex cathedra* quality.

⁴² We’d be remiss not to point out that reading this canon as though it applied to *any* doctor violates Reverend Crawford’s rule of faith. If solemn teaching “reads as its written” then he can hardly *enlarge* the canon to include St. Thomas when it only mentions St. Augustine.

⁴³ Which, as a reminder, taught that Catholics may read St. Alphonsus’s work (which includes baptism of desire) without even the slightest fear of encountering error.

Pope St. Innocent I didn’t declare or even say anything of the sort in Epistle 29. Reverend Crawford has mis-cited it, he should have cited it as Epistle 30. But he might as well have cited it as “Epistle from Mars” given that his “version” of the quote bears virtually no resemblance at all to what Pope St. Innocent actually said:

Crawford’s quote of Pope St. Innocent I, Mis-cited as “Epistle 29”	Pope St. Innocent I, Epistle 30
That the rewards of eternal life are given without baptism is very foolish. (cited by Crawford as “Epistle 29”)	But that which Your Fraternity asserts the Pelagians preach, that even without the grace of Baptism infants are able to be endowed with the rewards of eternal life, is quite idiotic. (cited in Jurgens, Vol. 3, p. 182, §2016)

What Pope St. Innocent *actually* said is utterly irrelevant to the baptism of desire debate. Crawford’s version of the quote is a complete fabrication. He’s emptied the letter of its *point* and rearranged it to make a *different* point.

The Curious Allocution: Pope Pius XII

Next up is an especially curious misquote of Pope Pius XII, found at the bottom of page 33 and moving to the top of page 34. The first thing to notice is that Reverend Crawford is using that loose language again, saying that the pope “declared” in an allocution. Popes do not “declare” in allocutions, not in the relevant sense. Moreover, the inclusion of this quote is selective at best. Crawford rejects Pius XII’s allocution to the midwives, so why he would think there’s any *value* in a papal allocution, never mind a papal allocution *from a pope who’s used allocutions to teach error* (according to Crawford’s argument), is beyond us.

Crawford’s Pope Pius XII 1953 Allocution Quote	Pope Pius XII 1953 Allocution at the Gregorian
‘The Church has never accepted even the most holy and most eminent Doctors, and does not now accept even a single one of them, as the principal source of truth. The Church certainly considers Thomas and Augustine great Doctors, and she accords them the highest praise; but, by divine mandate, the interpreter and guardian of the Sacred Scriptures and depository of Sacred Tradition living within her, the Church alone is the entrance to salvation; she alone, by herself, and under the protection and guidance of the Holy Ghost, is the source of truth.’ (Cited by Crawford as: Gregorian University, Oct. 17,1953; PTC 1351)	All. To the students of the Gregorian, October 17, 1953 (<i>The Fourth centenary of the University. –Historic aspect– Scholastic method. – Speculative studies and positive sciences</i>) No one of these disciplines or sciences constitutes an entrance into the Church; with all the more reason would it be false to assert that there is only one single door to enter by. Even the most holy and the most eminent Doctor, the Church never has accepted, and does not now accept as the principal source of truth. Certainly, she considers Thomas and Augustine great Doctors, and she accords them the highest praise; but she recognizes infallibility only in the inspired authors of the Sacred Scriptures. By divine mandate the interpreter and guardian of the Sacred Scriptures, depository of Sacred Tradition, living within her, the Church alone is the entrance to salvation, she alone, by herself, and under the protection and guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the source of truth. (<i>Papal Teachings: The Church</i> , Vol. 2, 1962, p. 695, §1351, all formatting retained)

As is our custom, we recommend noting the *context* first. The heading from “PTC” (the book Reverend Crawford says he got the quote from) makes the allocution’s context very clear: it’s delivered to students of the natural and historical sciences, and as we keep reading it’s clear that the *point* of the allocution is to exhort them to humility and to not assume that they understand

what they’re reading (a rather ironic point; we can understand why Crawford trimmed this).

Continuing with the context, another part of the quote cut by Crawford is when Pope Pius XII says that the Church “recognizes infallibility *only* in the inspired authors of the Sacred Scriptures.” Well, that’s not true, is it? Take that in a vacuum and it’s plainly wrong. But it wasn’t *said* in a vacuum, and the context makes it clear that he’s talking to the students about scripture⁴⁴, and what he’s saying is that scripture is wholly inerrant, while the doctors and fathers are not. So here’s a great example and reminder of how a quote’s meaning might seem to be one thing when it’s read without knowing why it was said and under what conditions and for what purpose, but then when contextualized it means something else⁴⁵.

Our third observation about the differences between the actual quote and Reverend Crawford’s version of it has nothing to do with the actual content but with the formatting and punctuation of it. One might not notice at first glance, but even where Crawford hasn’t changed the meaning, he’s changed the formatting. Crawford combines the last two sentences into a single sentence and uses fairly advanced grammar and syntax to hold it all together and maintain its intelligibility. A strange thing to happen by accident or through carelessness. But we mention it for a reason, and beg the reader’s patience—once we conclude our analysis of his quotes it will be clear why this deviation from his alleged source material is important.

Making no Distinctions where Distinctions *are* Made: Pope Leo XIII

Of all the material misrepresented by Reverend Crawford, it’s a little difficult to “rank” the severity of the different errors he makes, but if we tried, this quote from Pope Leo XIII on page 17

⁴⁴ One of the main controversies the Church was facing at this time was the spread of Darwinism and positivism in general; Catholic students and even some teachers began to read scripture in an unorthodox way—students of history and the natural sciences were especially susceptible to falling into these types of errors.

⁴⁵ Crawford’s omission of this sentence does not alter the sense of the overall quote any more than his previous omissions already had; we merely re-introduce the quote as a great example of how removing context can render the *meaning* of source material as something completely different than what was intended or purposed by the author.

would be a contender for the most egregious. Crawford presents a short and sweet quote from Pope Leo’s *Satis Cognitum*, a quote which he provides as though it was establishing a rule of faith with righteous and holy indignation. But just trying to *find* Crawford’s version of the quote in what Pope Leo actually said is like playing “Where’s Waldo: Papal Encyclical Version.” Are readers up for the challenge?

Crawford’s Quote of Pope Leo XIII, <i>Satis Cognitum</i>	Pope Leo XIII’s <i>Satis Cognitum</i>
You ask how I prove this? From the very words of the Lord! We can make no exceptions where no distinction is made. (Cited by Crawford as “ <i>Satis Cognitum</i> ”)	Who art thou? The great priest – the high priest. Thou art the Prince of Bishops and the heir of the Apostles.... Thou art he to whom the keys were given. There are, it is true, other gatekeepers of heaven and to pastors of flocks, but thou are so much the more glorious as thou hast inherited a different and more glorious name than all the rest. They have flocks consigned to them, one to each; to thee all the flocks are confided as one flock to one shepherd, and not alone the sheep, but the shepherds. You ask how I prove this? From the words of the Lord. To which – I do not say – of the Bishops, but even of the Apostles have all the sheep been so absolutely and unreservedly committed? If thou lovest me, Peter, feed my sheep. Which sheep? Of this or that country, or kingdom? My sheep, He says: to whom therefore is it not evident that he does not designate some, but all? We can make no exception where no distinction is made. (St. Bernard, quoted by Pope Leo XIII, 1896, in <i>Satis Cognitum</i> , §15.3, ellipses retained).

We adopt a posture of levity in presenting this quote because what’s been done to it is so disgraceful that crying or cursing are really the only alternatives to laughing. This quote:

- Is in Pope Leo’s encyclical, but not a word of it is actually *original* to Leo, the whole thing is him quoting St. Bernard.

- Has an *extremely* narrow and specific focus, not a broad one as is implied by the way Crawford mangled it.
 - That focus is aimed at the pope’s jurisdiction exclusively
- And the “distinction” not made is over Christ’s instruction to “feed my sheep”, which St. Bernard says is a proof that the pope, unlike other bishops, is designated to govern the whole flock.

So we are faced with broad omissions of context which amount to a violent *removal* of context, accompanied by a new artificial context. No ellipses are given to even indicate that this text was chopped up. Crawford has completely altered the sense of this quote, and we’re sure Pope Leo wouldn’t even recognize it.

A not so “Innocent” Omission: Pope Innocent III

Reverend Crawford gives the “Pope Leo treatment” to Pope Innocent III as well. This happens on page 42 of his Untitled Booklet. We’ll get right to the quote:

Crawford’s Quote of Pope Innocent III	Pope Innocent III, Letter to the Archbishop of Nidaros
In Baptism, two things are always and necessarily required, namely: the words and the element (water)... You ought not to doubt that they do not have true baptism in which one of them is missing. (Cited by Crawford as Denz. 412).	You have asked whether children ought to be regarded as Christians whom, when in danger of death, on account of the scarcity of water and the absence of a priest, the simplicity of some has anointed on the head and the breast, and between the shoulders with a sprinkling of saliva for baptism. We answer that since in baptism two things always, that is, "the word and the element,"* are required by necessity, according to which Truth says concerning the word: "Going into the world etc." And the same concerning the element says: "Unless anyone etc." [John 3:5] you ought not to doubt that those do not have true baptism in which not only both of the above mentioned (requirements) but one of them is missing. (Denz. 412)

Is any commentary even necessary on the two different “versions” of this quote? Pope Innocent III’s letter is teaching that *water*, not *spit*, is the correct matter for baptism. It’s disingenuous to prop this up as an argument against baptism of desire.

Regarding Quotes about Water

On the heels of Innocent III’s letter it is fitting to say a few words about similar quotes (whether used by Crawford or others who write similar works), where the necessity of *water* is emphasized. Throughout Catholic history, there have been instances where clerics have asked whether, due to the scarcity of water, *beer* or *saliva* could be used in sacramental baptism (Denz. 412 & 447); or whether or not the use of *oils* was required for validity (Denz. 449 & 542); or whether or not the *temperature* of the water affected the validity of baptism (Denz. 449 & 696); or, whether or not baptism was only valid if done by a certain amount of *immersions* (Denz. 229); or, whether or not baptism required any water *at all*, given the Protestant doctrine that John 3:5 was, indeed, *merely* a metaphor: i.e., that baptism didn’t *do* anything (Denz. 858); or, whether or not water with a certain amount of chemical mixtures would be valid (Denz. 1977). Such questions—about which there have been many throughout Church history—are simply unconcerned with baptism of desire, they’re focused on a sacramental question of what constitutes the necessary *matter* for a valid baptism. Such teachings are no more a denial of baptism of desire than teachings that only a *priest* can validly absolve sins are a denial of perfect contrition.

What Happened?

When we began to compose this work we knew that we disagreed with Reverend Crawford, but we never imagined that a significant part of our response would entail correcting truly fraudulent material packed into vain rhetoric passed off as “Catholic teaching.” With all the eloquent waxing about learning “directly from the top” and reading “The Supreme Court of the Church’s” decisions “as they were written,” one would expect Reverend Crawford to *do* exactly that. His Untitled Booklet is his opportunity to not only prove the soundness of his doctrine, but to show that the way he reached his conclusions (i.e., his rule of faith) is tenable and sound. But when he’s not telling us that teachings came from

ecumenical councils when they *didn't*, or implying that his papal sources are teaching us about baptism when they *aren't*, he can only maintain his views by taking a ball point pen and a bottle of white out to the very decrees he insists we should be learning from.

And we have only surveyed a *selection* of these such errors. There were other quotes that suffered from similar problems. For example, his quotes from Pope Pius XII's *Mediator Dei* (pp. 6 & 53) and *Mystici Corporis Christi* (pp. 5, 6, & 52), his quote from Pope Leo IV/The Council of Valence (pp. 4, 21, 25, 27, 35, 41, & 48), his quote from *Cantate Domino* (pp. 16 & 51), another quote from St. Augustine (p. 31), and many others suffer from omissions, additions, excessive ellipses, and context removals. The closer one looks, the worse it gets.

A Pupil, not a Mastermind

Having *exhaustively* researched every single quote Reverend Crawford used, our own opinion is that he didn't actually cut up these texts himself, or at least not most of them. There were a few idiosyncrasies that provided enough information to eventually track down the *real* sources Reverend Crawford is relying on. These include Michael Malone's (1987) *The Apostolic Digest* and Adam Miller's (2010) *Life-Giving Waters*. Reverend Crawford—to his benefit or detriment, we're not really sure which—appears to be simply copying quotes from the books of these two laymen.

We were first “clued in” to this fact when we realized that nearly every single one of Crawford's thirty-odd quotes from Denzinger didn't actually align with the phraseology used in Denzinger⁴⁶. Yet with near invariable consistency, Crawford's quotes from Denzinger matched up perfectly with what Miller and Malone attribute to Denzinger⁴⁷. But there was much more evidence as well, like the fact that many of Reverend Crawford's

⁴⁶ Such inconsistency cannot be attributed to different translations, since there's only *one* pre-conciliar English translation of Denzinger (by Defarrari). So while lots of different publishing houses have produced Denzinger reprints, every reprint is identical in its translation.

⁴⁷ We suspect that Miller and Malone are using the *Novus Ordo* Denzinger, which is why their phraseology does not align with the traditional Denzinger translation.

errors—some of them *quite* unique, like the strange but grammatically advanced mis-transcription of Pope Pius XII’s 1953 allocution—are *identical* to errors made by Malone and Miller. For instance:

- Both Malone and Miller have the exact same (fraudulent) quote from Pope St. Innocent I, *and* both mis-cite it as “Epistle 29” instead of Epistle 30, *and* both curiously use the word “foolish” (most translations say “silly” or “idiotic”—we could not find an approved Catholic translation that used the word “foolish”) (Malone, p. 275; Miller p. 54).
- Both Malone and Miller add the word “only” to Pope Clement V’s teaching at the Council of Vienne (Malone p. 298; Miller p. 13).
- Both Malone and Miller have the fraudulent “You ask how I can prove this” quote, both ascribe it to Pope Leo XIII (neither mention the quote is actually St. Bernard), and both use it in a similar way to Crawford (Malone, p. 274; Miller, p. 50).
- Miller uses the same grammatically advanced mis-transcription of Pope Pius XII’s Allocution. All added commas, semi-colons, etc. are identical to Crawford’s. In fact, Miller signals it in the exact same way, stating that the Pope “declared in an allocution” (Miller, p. 52).

Another smoking gun which shows that Reverend Crawford is relying heavily on Malone and Miller is that he frequently cites “PTC” as a source for his material. But we doubt that Reverend Crawford owns this book. “PTC” is an acronym that, so far as we can tell, was invented by Michael Malone to indicate the (1962) book *Papal Teachings: The Church*. This book was originally compiled by Benedictine Monks in France. In 1962 it was translated to English somewhat unusually by a *female* religious in Boston, Mother O’Gorman. It was censored by a certain Rev. Matthew Stapleton, who appears to have been an ecumenist of the highest order, leading conferences in the late sixties where he explained to Catholics that they could attend synagogues if they were invited (Portsmouth Herald, 1969). And this all leads us to the punchline, which is that the book’s *imprimatur* was given by

none other than Richard Cushing⁴⁸. Now, it requires a suspension of disbelief for us to suppose that Reverend Crawford would knowingly own and learn from a book which only exists because Richard Cushing allowed it to be printed.

Miller and Malone both cite PTC regularly⁴⁹. They always just call it “PTC”, and one has to dig through Malone’s cryptic references section to even find out what “PTC” means. So we figure that when Crawford was transcribing material from Miller and Malone, he just kept the “PTC” citation wherever it came up and never looked into it. If only he applied the same suspicion with which he views the ordinary magisterium to these laymen!

Our readers are *Catholic*. They have a right to know where allegedly “Catholic” material is coming from. So it’s necessary to quickly provide an exposé on Reverend Crawford’s teachers so that Catholics know to stay far, far away.

Michael Malone and Adam Miller

Michael Malone’s *The Apostolic Digest* is full of mistakes and scholarly faux-pas. When editing the “definitive edition” he describes how earlier editions *didn’t have any references at all*. He only begrudgingly added references later, and at that, he admits that he’s not even sure if they’re correct. It was difficult for him to go back and add references because his actual method of composition included nothing more than him recording notes on “some good books” he’d read over the years, and then translating those notes to printed form.

We’re sure that if one of our readers picked up a notebook on the side of the road with a bunch of hand-scribbled quotes attributed to different popes they wouldn’t pump their fist in the air and say “at last! I’ve found what the Church teaches!” They’d be

⁴⁸ We suspect that most readers—or at least, those who disagree with us—know who Richard Cushing was. For those who are unsure, Richard Cushing was the Archbishop of Boston during the Fr. Feeney saga, and Cushing was principally responsible for butting heads with Feeney and moving his case along to the Holy Office.

⁴⁹ In fact, both authors rely on the same material to such a degree that for all intents and purposes, anything Crawford appears to have pulled from Malone he just as likely could have pulled from Miller, and vice versa.

incredulous and they’d check the quotes. Or, they’d just throw it away *because they already have access to approved collections of Catholic teaching*. But at bottom, that’s all Michael Malone’s *Apostolic Digest* is: a collection of a layman’s notes. We’re certainly not the only ones to notice this. Confirmed reviewers of the book have complained that

This book is laden with errors. Having researched some of Malone's sources, one glaring example being quotes from the III Council of Constantinople, it was discovered that some quotes he list appear nowhere in the original text. I went directly to the Latin primary sources at times and these quotes were entirely missing. This is a dangerous book for those not inclined or not able to individually verify each quote and citation (C.F., from “Apostolic Digest Sales Page” [Amazon] 2016)

Others pointed out the obvious:

I am a Traditional Catholic (NOT Novus Ordo) and I can say that it is a horrible book — Malone doesn't understand the nature of the authentic and ordinary Magisterium of the Church, and is making it up as he goes along. If you have it, you should just throw it away. (gsafreed, from “Apostolic Digest Sales Page” [Amazon], 2018)

The Apostolic Digest is anything *but* apostolic, and it’s sure to cause *indigestion*.

It was to our great amusement to find that Michael Malone uses more than seventy-five *post-conciliar* sources to argue for EENS. And not just *any* post-conciliar sources—Malone cites John XXIII ten times, Paul VI more than twenty times, John Paul II more than twenty times, Vatican II five times, he even managed to find a few quotes from John Paul I, and to top it all off he even cites the *Eucharistic prayer from the Novus Ordo*—all in the general defense of there being no salvation outside the Church! If one needed proof that Malone is an author who takes material out of context, determined to twist it to suit his own purposes, one needn’t look any further.

Adam Miller’s credentials aren’t any better than Malone’s. Miller is a high school teacher who runs “Tower of David Publications” on the side. He describes his (2010) *Life Giving*

Waters as “an adult catechism on baptism with definitive magisterial answers to questions” (p. 3). We think we hardly need to point out that it is wholly presumptive of a *layman* to write a *catechism*, never mind one with “definitive magisterial answers.” In addition to his “catechism”, he’s also compiled his own faux-Denzinger and even a defense of Paul VI’s *Novus Ordo Missae*, which he describes as

An in depth examination, critique, and refutation of arguments put forth by radical Catholic traditionalists who doubt or deny the validity of the New Rite of Mass promulgated by Pope Paul VI. (Tower of David Publications, 2018, p. 1).

Not exactly the sort of resume one would hope their *sedevacantist* “pastor” to place his trust in.

Bargain Bin Rule of Faith

We have demonstrated that Malone and Miller are not trustworthy. The actual content of their work “speaks for itself”. This is setting aside their actual *conclusions*—i.e., the fact that they deny baptism of desire—and just looking at their *methods*, which are equal parts laughable scholarship and just plain dishonesty. Even if, *per impossible*, they were right in their conclusions—it would be by accident, not design. The proven falsehoods they rely on to make their case are too severe to take their work at face value.

Those reasons alone make it lamentable that Malone and Miller have found their way into Reverend Crawford’s Untitled Booklet, since he’s now repeating and disseminating their lies—whether he realizes it or not. But there’s an additional layer of disingenuousness to the affair, and that’s the fact that Reverend Crawford deemed these men to be appropriate sources of Catholic Teaching in the *first place*. Amidst all the “learning from the top” rhetoric, Reverend Crawford can’t even be hassled with opening a proper copy of Denzinger. *If* he’s going to insist on his bogus rule of faith, at least he could apply it in a way that’s somewhat *respectable*. He’s instead going through the theological bargain bin—and he’s getting ripped off. The rebukes he issues to those who affirm baptism of desire—that we’re learning from “mere men” and not the “Supreme Court of the Church”, or that we’re putting

the “law of man” ahead of the “law of God”—ring like a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal when his *own* learning method is laid bare.

Conclusion and Summary

All told, Reverend Crawford uses about seventy five unique quotes in his booklet (many of the quotes are provided multiple times, making it appear as though there are more). About half of the quotes he cites are from Trent, Vatican I, or involve some teaching or another regarding membership and salvation. Most of these quotes we’ve already addressed elsewhere, with many being addressed in Chapter Two, others being addressed in Chapter Four, and of course the sources on periodic continence we addressed in the last chapter. There’s no doubt that Reverend Crawford *misunderstands* most of the material he gets his hands on. But our focus in this chapter hasn’t been to correct misunderstandings or to even discuss *doctrine* at all. Our focus has been to expose blatant *misrepresentations* of Catholic source material. To show that the misunderstandings *themselves* are propped up and reinforced with fraudulent source material. This includes falsely passing off epistles as though they were from ecumenical councils; it includes adding words to ecumenical councils that were never there; it includes patching together

disparate quotes from separate works to make “new” quotes; it includes removing crucial information from quotes which, if retained, makes the quotes irrelevant—if not actually contrary—to Reverend Crawford’s purposes; it includes ripping apart, chopping up, shredding, spray-painting, and then duct-taping quotes back together.

We of course must disclaim the possibility that we’ve misread the tea leaves: it’s *theoretically* possible that the bevy of identical mistakes between Crawford, Malone, and Miller are all just bizarre coincidences. Maybe instead of going to Michael Malone and Adam Miller, Reverend Crawford just went “to the Internet.” Maybe he got his material from anonymous posters online, and in an unlikely coincidence, happened to only select sources that converged with these authors. Or maybe his mother or Neal Webster sent him an email with “some good quotes” and

he just ran with it. Or maybe he really *did* chop up all of these quotes himself. Since he never bothered with a proper bibliography so that Catholics could read the same things he was reading, some doubt might always linger about exactly *where* he got his material. But of one thing there is **no** doubt: he didn’t get it from where he said he did⁵⁰.

We hesitate to say Reverend Crawford *knew* he was relying on fraudulent material—we doubt he did. This isn’t to absolve him of using fraudulent material, but to properly contextualize his role in the fraud as a hapless follower, not a leader. Having conducted extensive research on all the material he uses, the impression we get is that he simply went to authors whom he knew already agreed with him and borrowed quotes from them that “looked good.” He did this without any investigation as to whether or not the material he was using was legitimate.

Despite his best attempt to instill skepticism toward the Church and her ordinary teaching, and despite his best attempt to romanticize the notion of a pure knowledge of the faith through solemn teaching alone, Crawford’s *own* methods are excessively credulous. He’s not even *going* to solemn teaching, but instead relying on hacks like Miller and Malone to tell him *what that teaching is*. Crawford has not done any of the heavy lifting. If he had, maybe he would have noticed that the things he believes are **nowhere to be found**.

*Above all, be scrupulously truthful. To all, friends and foes alike, give that serious attention which does not misrepresent any opinion, does not distort any statement, does not mutilate any quotation. **We need not fear to serve the cause of Christ less efficiently by putting on His spirit*** (Vermeersch, 1913, §§5-6).

⁵⁰ We say this as a general rule. We’re fairly certain that for Trent he (mostly) used the Tan translation and he also appears to have relied on an approved edition of Trent’s catechism as well. He didn’t get *everything* from Miller and Malone. By our estimation, around half (possibly more) of his quotes come from there.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion: on Truth

A conclusion is supposed to be written in response to the question “so what?” It is a chance for the authors to explain why everything they said actually matters. This is a particularly relevant question in the present context because debates over baptism of desire (and even periodic continence, although to a lesser extent) sometimes become reduced to a question of *practical value*. Those who prefer to deny baptism of desire, having run out of arguments (or maybe just in haste to conclude the debate), might say something like “we’re all baptized, so why do these *hypotheticals* about unbaptized catechumens matter?”

Such questions cannot be asked without assuming an anti-Catholic view of truth. We are in *the service* of truth. *Truth* is not in the service of us. And we’re sure readers need no reminder of this. After all, it’s not like denying baptism of desire provides any great *convenience* to a Catholic. On the contrary, it’s incredibly *difficult* to deny baptism of desire. We do not deny that our opponents have a great deal of rigor or zeal, nor do we deny that they are prepared to make sacrifices in order to maintain their views. All the more strange it is to us, then, when we hear them resort to pragmatic arguments which silently assume that something is only *true* if it is also *useful*.

Clearly, people have a tendency to keep believing what they already believe. People will say unusual things, unbecoming things, and uncharacteristic things in order to maintain that they “have the truth.” We are literally *made* for the truth, our intellects being directly ordered toward the recognition and apprehension of it. It is, therefore, a great difficulty to recognize that one has been wrong. It means that one has failed in their fundamental *purpose*.

Reverend Crawford’s Untitled Booklet is “exhibit A” in the lengths to which a person will go to maintain that they are correct. Let’s recall how the Council of Trent described the faith of the justified catechumen:

Aroused and assisted by divine grace, receiving faith by hearing they are freely moved toward God, believing that to be true which has been divinely revealed and promised (Denz. 798)

This is plainly describing supernatural—not merely *natural*—faith. But Reverend Crawford is willing to, at least in his own mind, *change the very definition of supernatural faith* in order to maintain his argument. He is willing to argue that the Church’s laws are fallible, and therefore conducive to the injury of souls, in order to maintain his argument. He will cite *anything* that makes it seem like his argument is true. He cites the sixth century diocesan laws of Braga, promulgated by eight bishops and no pope, as what the Church “really” teaches. He digs up an old letter from Archbishop Murray, reads into it words that aren’t there, and then offers it as a proof of what the Church “really” teaches. All while rebuking those who affirm baptism of desire for not “learning from the top.” And then in the same breath relying on lay-authored “Catechisms” and “Digests” to actually find out what that teaching is. These are not the sorts of things that a person needs to do if the truth is actually on their side. These are the sorts of things that people do to *conceal* errors, not to *expunge* them.

Not everyone has the time, inclination, or ability to deeply analyze any given controversy. It is fairly natural to simply look at the *people* who believe some thing or another, and based on their commitment to their ideas, decide to either agree or disagree with them. And there is nothing intrinsically wrong with that approach. Christian apologetics have often pointed to the fact that the Apostles were prepared to be *executed* for their belief in the Resurrected Christ as a proof that they really did witness His resurrection, since people don’t tend to be willing to die for uncertain things. So there is *some* value in allowing the apparent genuineness of someone else’s beliefs to inform our own.

But such an approach is neither the fullest nor surest measure of truth. It is tempting to think that if someone believes *passionately*, they must believe rightly. It is hard to imagine that someone would commit themselves so unreservedly to something that is wrong. But this happens all the time. One needn’t look any further than the passionate and riotous clamoring of the pro-transgender cultural Marxists for a current example of this. And throughout history we find plenty of additional examples. Pagans have taken up arms in defense of their beliefs. And the Church has seen heretics who were willing to die for their errors.

An argument made with confidence is not necessarily an argument well made. And Reverend Crawford is, again, “exhibit A” to this effect. One would hardly imagine that an argument made with such a triumphant tone would be so demonstrably false. One would hardly imagine that an argument presented with such confidence would be an argument that actually rests on fraudulent material. And yet, here we are. His booklet is a theological vacuum, and the only thing genuine about it is the pride and confidence with which he presents his errors.

So if we can’t always rely on a person’s confidence in their beliefs to know what is true, and if we can’t always look into the matter for ourselves, how can we ever know? One step in the right direction is to not politicize truth. In these dark and leaderless times, too many Catholics view religious truth on a political spectrum. On the far right is the Catholic Church, with everything to the “left” of her being some form or another of error. In this view, the further a proposition is from being liberal, the safer it is.

But what about the Fraticelli? They argued that the Church should own nothing. The Catharii? They practiced ritual suicide and condemned all carnal relations. The Donatists? They argued that defection from the faith entailed the loss of sacramental character. The Jansenists? They were thinly-veiled Catholic-Calvinists. Viewing “extreme” views as “safe” views is rendered quickly false with even a superficial survey of Catholic history.

We live in a time where the predominant errors are liberal ones. As such, it seems somewhat natural that the responses to those errors would emphasize the more “conservative” aspects of the Catholic faith. But pendulums have a tendency to swing too far. And in our zeal against liberal errors, we must be wary of inadvertently adhering to errors on the opposite end of the spectrum.

So as tempting and as simple as it might seem to just find what our enemies believe and pick whatever is the opposite of that, such an approach makes truth *relative* to liberalism. The Catholic Church is the ark of salvation. One may fall overboard port or starboard. In either event, one has left the safety of the salvific barque. And once one is drowning, one can hardly find

solace in saying “at least I wasn’t a liberal.” Not only can one find no solace in such a sentiment, the sentiment isn’t even true. For, while the *proposition* “there is no baptism of desire” is an error “to the right,” only *liberalism* can actually bring one to that error. Liberalism is *the* principal enabler of doctrinal error, whether the error be of excess or laxity.

Liberalism ultimately comes from a rejection of authority. It is *non serviam*. It is Lucifer’s sin cleverly re-packaged with the allure of modernity. One can only maintain a denial of baptism of desire by rejecting the authority which teaches it. And alarmingly, those who deny baptism of desire are *eager* to share their rejection of that authority. They will say that what they reject is the authority of man, and they reject it because it violates the laws of God.

That was a very convincing argument five hundred years ago when the Protestants first came up with it, but Catholics today should know better. Let’s remember that what makes someone a “liberal” Catholic is not that they *reject* Divine Revelation, but that they accept it provisionally—once they’re satisfied that it meets their expectations. Allow us to quote from a work revered by all traditional Catholics, Fr. Felix Sarda y Salvany’s (1886) *Liberalism is a Sin*:

[The liberal Catholic] accepts Revelation, not on account of the infallible Revealer, but because of the "infallible" receiver. With him the individual judgment is the rule of faith. He believes in the independence of reason. It is true he accepts the Magisterium of the Church, yet he does not accept it as the sole authorized expounder of divine truth. He reserves, as a coefficient factor in the determination of that truth, his own private judgment. (Ch. 7, §1)

One who denies baptism of desire receives what the Church’s ordinary magisterium proposes—hundreds if not thousands of different truths that range from the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Mother, to Guardian Angels, to the sainthoods of the Apostles, and so on. But they draw the line at baptism of desire, or periodic continence, or wherever else. Why accept some but not all proposed truths? It seems that there can be no other answer to this aside from private judgment mediating the acceptance of religious truth. Some truths are met with acceptance by the

infallible receiver, while others, privately judged to be incompatible with truths already infallibly received, are rejected⁵¹.

No one who rejects legitimate religious authority while still claiming the name Christian admits to such a rejection. They will say (indeed, sometimes without even being accused of anything) that they believe everything God has revealed, that they hold fast to the Catholic faith in its entirety, and that we are the ones who have supplanted the authority of God with “the authority of man.” But there’s nothing between them and the solemn council texts, just as there’s nothing between the Protestant and his bible. And in both cases, questioning the rule of faith will get the following retort: “Scripture/Solemn teaching speaks for itself to those of good will.” Of course “those of good will” is tacked onto the end because they can’t admit that legitimate disputes about the meanings of these texts could arise without undermining their whole rule of faith. If there *could* be a legitimate dispute, then it doesn’t speak for itself.

This rule of faith—the one which accepts solemn teaching alone—is thoroughly Protestant, and it is fueled by independent, individualist interpretation. That is why, despite the fact that Fr. Feeney only died forty years ago, there are so *many* different ways that people deny baptism of desire. Some do it the “classic” way, which is what Feeney did and what Crawford did in 2017, by arguing that baptism of desire justified, but that dying justified wasn’t enough to be saved. Others do it the “revised” way, usually attributed to Fr. Wathen, which is to argue that anyone justified by baptism of desire will either lose the state of justification and die, or be baptized before they die. Still others get more creative, like Crawford in 2018 or the Zirconium Brothers, denying outright that baptism of desire justifies. We’re sure that before the crisis is over there will be even *more* ways to understand this “basic” Catholic Truth which purportedly “speaks for itself”. What Trent actually teaches about baptism of desire differs depending on who you ask, just as the meaning of scripture differs depending on which

⁵¹ Some may think such an argument undermines the entire traditional Catholic enterprise. It does not. For many reasons, but chiefly this: Vatican II was, *from day one*, suspected by orthodox and traditional pastors to be fraudulent. Resistance to Vatican II is something that can be traced to the very root of its proposals, while Baptism of Desire was peacefully taught and received for *at least* half a millennium before anyone “noticed.”

Protestant you ask. But what all who deny baptism of desire have in common is their rejection of the same authority: the ordinary magisterium.

We think that to some degree, Catholics who assert that solemn teaching alone is the rule of faith have very little idea what they are rejecting. This doesn't make it any safer—if anything, it makes it more *dangerous* because they can't anticipate all of the consequent errors they adopt along the way. We are not speaking only of additional doctrinal rejections, although that is of course a risk. We speak of errors related to the very problems we face today.

To give one notable example, consider modernism. It is the chief scourge of the Church and society at large. A Catholic's understanding of modernism is owed principally to Pope Pius X's (1907) *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*. We're sure virtually anyone who would pick up *this* book has read *Pascendi*, even if it's been a while. Pope St. Pius X's encyclical is, in many ways, the very ethos and foundation of the traditional resistance to Vatican II.

But *Pascendi* isn't an exercise of the extraordinary magisterium. It has no solemn definitions. The "synthesis of all heresies" isn't a category of proscription. It isn't an anathema. So the very rule of faith which is propped up by Reverend Crawford and others as the necessary antidote to liberal error categorically excludes the Church's most powerful exposé of the insidious modernist system.

If we use that rule of faith, how do we even *know* modernism is wrong? The encyclical *sounds* good, but so does Bach. And if we *do* acknowledge *Pascendi* as true, what measure are we using? If we've rejected ordinary teaching, we only "know" modernism is wrong because it agrees with what we already believe. Not because it comes from the Church. So even if we *do* get some things right, this rule of faith belies a corrupted and distorted concept of authority and truth. And as such, we can't *trust* it.

To enlarge the example, we find that a rejection of baptism of desire and periodic continence are almost invariably

accompanied by an ignorance or dismissal of scholastic philosophy. We would go as far to say these rejections are *enabled* by such attitudes. And to a certain extent such an ignorance is fine, since lay Catholics probably aren't expected to be familiar with it, or if they are, they're not expected to know much beyond the very basics. We don't need to be philosophers to go to Heaven. Nevertheless, scholastic philosophy is utterly crucial to the demonstration of sound doctrine and a disdain or ambivalence toward it from *clergy* is wholly reprehensible.

For those who've read it recently, or those with good memories: how does *Pascendi* end? After Pope St. Pius X obliterates the modernist doctrine, he concludes with a determination of how modernism is to be overcome. His principal solution is this: St. Thomas Aquinas. Not "reading dogmas as they were once defined," not "adhering to the plain meanings of the words," not "letting solemn teaching speak for itself," not "reading the words the way they read," nor any other silly rhetoric. Instead, he says:

On this philosophical foundation [of St. Thomas Aquinas] the theological edifice is to be carefully raised. Promote the study of theology, Venerable Brethren, by all means in your power, so that your clerics on leaving the seminaries may carry with them a deep admiration and love of it, and always find in it a source of delight. (§46)

But to some, St. Thomas is only significant because "he got the Immaculate Conception wrong". Which attitude is right? Theirs, or *Pascendi's*? Is St. Thomas's contribution to the Church a warning that Doctors are useless, or is it a system of philosophical principles without which not even the *words used to propose dogmas* can be understood?

Nothing is safe when the ordinary magisterium is set aside. A better—and certainly more Catholic approach—is the approach of St. Philip's Eunuch. When Philip found him reading Isaias, he asked, "Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest?" To which the Eunuch said, *how can I unless some man show me?* (Acts 8:31).

Who showed those who deny baptism of desire the way? The answer *isn't* Trent. It wasn't "the words the way they read." No

one has ever picked up Trent, completely on their own, read its canons on baptism and justification, and walked away immediately thinking “well, the Church definitely condemns baptism of desire.” It may seem bold and presumptuous for us to blankly assert this, but our proof is the fact that for five hundred continuous years, everyone who read Trent—in *Latin*, including doctors of the Church—failed to arrive at that understanding. So unless we’re prepared to argue that no one actually *read it* for half a millennium—or worse, that everyone who *did* read it maliciously twisted “the way the words read”—we have to conclude that *even if* someone goes directly to Trent, they don’t come away from it with baptism of desire denial.

No, there’s always some mediator between the Catholic and the primary documents, even for those who claim to be learning directly from them. It’s Fr. Feeney, the Dimonds, Reverend Crawford, or even just their friends and associations. There’s no *truly* “going to the top.” When the ordinary magisterium is removed, it’s always replaced by some other mini-magisterium. The denial itself is a fabricated idea, with Trent used to support it *after* the fact. It’s the same story with the Protestants. They’re not *really* getting their scriptural ideas “from the plain meaning of scripture.” They get the ideas from those who blazed the trail ahead of them, and then private interpretation picks up the slack—just as it does with baptism of desire denial—and maintains the errors indefinitely. It is a cycle of false authorities informing individual understanding of doctrine, and then that individual standard of doctrine serves as the litmus test of orthodoxy. The ordinary magisterium isn’t just *rejected*, it’s *replaced*. Not, as our opponents would like us to believe, by solemn teaching, but by doctrinal dissidents and private interpretations.

All of these considerations go back to Chapter One. In Chapter One we argued for the value of the ordinary magisterium. We provided many arguments—from reason, from Tradition, and from authority—to prove that it is an *infallible* source of teaching, and not just “when it agrees” with the solemn magisterium. It can never *disagree* with the solemn magisterium. It is the proximate rule of faith.

We will not revisit those arguments here. Rather, we will simply point to the fruits of denying the ordinary magisterium its role in Catholic learning: Doctrinal chaos controlled by theological demi-tyrants. Everything—all doctrines, and the Church herself—is put slavishly into the service of maintaining the pet theories. Catholic teaching—solemn or otherwise—is stripped of its content until only what is useful to the cause is left. From the ashes of obliterated doctrine arises a perverse phoenix heralded by the little tyrants as the reflection of Truth Incarnate. The credulous laity, conned by this rhetoric, are excited to see the Church purified by this profane crucible. At such a dramatic distance from authentic Catholic learning, they cheer as they confuse theological alchemy with Tradition. “This”, they say, “is what the Church has always taught.”

...

It is our pious hope that the Church will be restored. That Catholic churches everywhere will once again house the Sacrament of the Altar and be staffed with real priests who teach real doctrine and who are sent from a real authority. That Catholics will one day be able to trust their pastors again, and “like newborn babes,” receive the rational milk of doctrine without guile (1 Pet 2:2). That for the first time in more than a generation, there will be a Vicar of Christ on earth again. We are sure that everyone shares in our hope. And we do not think it is a vain hope, since with God all things are possible.

The Church is sometimes said to mystically parallel the life of Christ. The consummation of Vatican II was the consummation of the Church’s passion, and the initiation of her Holy Saturday. Holy Saturday is distinguished by an uncomfortable quietude as the Church lays silent. But we know that if the Church endures Holy Saturday, she will eventually enjoy a restoration, just as the Resurrected Lord did. When the restoration occurs, the Church’s ministry will be seen and known everywhere. But those who persist in this profane rule of faith will be deaf to it. When the Church is restored, they will be like the disciples who were leaving Jerusalem, set on their own way (Luke 24:13-20). As the eyes of those disciples prevented them from seeing the Risen Lord, their ears will prevent them from hearing the restored Church. They will encounter the restored Church face to face and not even recognize her.

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Appendix A: Bishop Pivarunas's Questions

Questions to Answer

1) Given the following papal teachings:

Pope Pius IX: "...it is not sufficient for learned Catholics to accept and revere the aforesaid dogmas of the Church, but that it is also necessary to subject themselves to the decisions pertaining to doctrine which are issued by the Pontifical Congregations, and also to those forms of doctrine which are held by the common and constant consent of Catholics as theological truths and conclusions, so certain that opinions opposed to these same forms of doctrine, although they cannot be called heretical, nevertheless deserve some theological censure." *Tuas Libenter* (1863), DZ 1684.

CONDEMNED PROPOSITION: "22. The obligation by which Catholic teachers and writers are absolutely bound is restricted to those matters only which are proposed by the infallible judgment of the Church, to be believed by all as dogmas of the faith." *Encyclical Quanta Cura* and *Syllabus of Errors* (1864), DZ 1699, 1722.

Is it permitted to a Catholic to deny the teaching of the Holy Office Letter of 1949, approved by Pius XII, which teaches salvation through baptism of desire for those who are not actually members of the Church? If yes, how do you justify that in light of the above papal quotes?

2) In light of the same above papal quotes, do you believe a Catholic can reject Pius XII's teaching on natural family planning which was published in the official *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*? If so, what are your reasons and what theologians can you quote who teach that you can reject such papal teaching?

3) The Council of Trent says that Penance and Baptism are necessary for salvation *in the same way*:

"This sacrament of penance is for those who have fallen after baptism necessary for salvation, as baptism is for those who have not yet been regenerated." (Decree on Penance and Extreme Unction - Sess. 14, Chapter 2. Bold added)

Yet, the Council teaches that the *desire* of Penance can suffice:

"Repentance after falling into sin includes... sacramental confession of those sins, **at least in desire** (sacramentalem confessionem, **saltem in voto**), when a suitable occasion offers..." (Decree on Justification - Sess. 6, Chapter 14; Bold added)

"The eternal punishment... is remitted together with the guilt **either by the sacrament or by the desire of the sacrament**(vel Sacramento, vel Sacramenti voto)..." (Decree on Justification - Sess. 6, Chapter 14)

If Penance and Baptism are of the *same type of necessity* according to the Council, how do you deny that a desire can suffice for Baptism too?

4) The Council of Trent teaches:

"If anyone denies that sacramental confession was instituted by divine law or is necessary to salvation...let him be anathema." (Canons on Penance, Canon 6)

These are practically identical to the words the Council uses to speak of the necessity of baptism. They say Penance is "*necessary to salvation*." In relation to baptism you interpret the phrase "*necessary to salvation*" as *excluding all possibility of baptism of desire sufficing for salvation*.

How then do you interpret these words *differently* in relation to Penance, allowing salvation to one who dies without confession but after making a perfect act of contrition with the *desire* for Penance? If the words are so absolute in your mind, how can they admit of desire in relation to Penance?

5) Considering the following errors of Michael du Bay condemned by Pope St. Pius V:

"#71 Through contrition even when joined with perfect charity and with the desire to receive the

sacrament, a crime is not remitted *without the actual reception of the sacrament*, except in case of necessity, or of martyrdom." (Denzinger 1071. Emphasis added) "#31 Perfect and sincere charity, which is from a "pure heart and good conscience and a faith not feigned," can be in catechumens as well as in penitents without the remission of sins." (Denzinger 1031)

If you say baptism of desire justifies a man but does not allow him to be saved, how do you explain God sending a man to hell who has been justified and is, therefore, in the state of grace?

6) Can you quote one pope who says that God promises to give the *actual sacrament* of Baptism to one who has been justified by baptism of desire?

7) Do you believe Canon Law is infallible?

8) If you believe baptism of desire applies *only to justification and not to salvation* how do you explain the following Canon which clearly says baptism of desire applies to *salvation*?

Canon 737: "Baptism, the door to and the foundation of the sacraments, necessary for the salvation of all persons *in fact or at least in desire*, is not validly conferred except through a washing with true, natural water accompanied by the prescribed verbal formula." (Emphasis added)

9) Do you believe the Church erred in the above canon (737)?

10) Can 1239, §2: "Catechumens who through no fault of their own *die without baptism*, are to be counted as baptized."

This canon specifically says these catechumens died *without baptism*. If you believe that all adults who die without baptism go to hell, how can the Church permit them to have ecclesiastical burial?

11) If you believe baptism of desire applies *only to justification and not to salvation* how do you explain the following which clearly says baptism of desire applies to *salvation*?

Rituale Romanum approved by Pope Pius XI in 1925: "Holy Baptism, the gateway of the christian religion and of eternal life, which holds the first place among the other Sacraments of the new Law instituted by Christ, is necessary to all *in fact or at least in desire for salvation*, as the Truth Himself testifies in these words: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of God' (John 3,5)." (Titulus II, Cap. I, "De Sacramento Baptismi Rite Administrando"; Emphasis added)

12) Do you believe Pius XI erred in approving this *Rituale*?

13) The Catechism of the Council of Trent says:

"On adults, however, the Church has not been accustomed to confer the Sacrament of Baptism at once, but has ordained that it be deferred for a certain time. **The delay is not attended with the same danger as in the case of infants**, which we have already mentioned; should any unforeseen accident make it impossible for adults to be washed in the salutary waters, their **intention and determination** to receive Baptism and their **repentance** for past sins, will avail them to **grace and righteousness**. (*Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests, Issued by order of Pope Pius V*, p. 179, Rockford, Ill.: TAN Books and Publ., Inc.; Bold added)

Since this catechism was written by those who lived at the time of the Council and by order of the pope, they would have known the true meaning of the Canons on Baptism from the Council of Trent. Do you believe the writers of this catechism are wrong and you are right? If not, why do you not accept their teaching?

14) Do you accept the following teaching of Pius IX which *no where mentions actual baptism in saying these persons can be saved*? How does this fit with your denial of salvation through baptism of desire?

Encyclical of Pope Pius IX to the bishops of Italy, *Quanto conficiamur moerore*: "We all know that those

who are afflicted with invincible ignorance with regard to our holy religion, if they carefully keep the precepts of the natural law that have been written by God in the hearts of all men, if they are prepared to obey God, and if they lead a virtuous and dutiful life, **can attain eternal life by the power of divine light and grace.** For God, who reads comprehensively in every detail the minds and souls, the thoughts and habits of all men, will not permit, in accordance with his infinite goodness and mercy, anyone who is not guilty of a **voluntary fault** to suffer eternal punishment. However, also well-known is the Catholic dogma that no one can be saved outside the Catholic Church, and that those who **obstinately** oppose the authority and definitions of that Church, and who **stubbornly** remain separated from the unity of the Church and from the successor of Peter, the Roman Pontiff (to whom the Savior has entrusted the care of his vineyard), cannot obtain salvation." (*Denzinger* #1677. Cf. *The Church Teaches*, #178. Rockford, Ill.: TAN Books and Publ., Inc.; Emphasis added)

15) St. Thomas' theology has been held in high regard by the popes for centuries and Leo XIII ordered it to be used in seminaries. If he erred against a dogma of the Church as you say, how do you explain that not one pope pointed this out or ordered this error expunged?

16) Pope Gregory XVI said in the Bull of Canonization for St. Alphonsus:
 "What deserves to be particularly noticed is, that after a careful examination of his works, it has been ascertained that they all, notwithstanding their number and extent, *may be perused by the faithful with the most perfect safety.*" This bull was signed by thirty-four cardinals. (Cf. *Sermons of St. Alphonsus Liguori*, p. xii. Rockford, Ill.: TAN Publishers)
 Do you believe this pope erred in stating this? Why would he say this if St. Alphonsus taught a doctrine condemned by Trent as you say?

17) Can you quote one pope or Council which says: "If anyone says you can get to heaven by baptism of desire without the actual reception of the sacrament, let him be anathema."?

18) Do you believe that theologians after the Council of Trent's decrees on Baptism (including Doctors of the Church and many saints) have all misunderstood what the Council meant? How could they *all be wrong*? How many theologians can you quote after Trent who claim that the Council did not teach baptism of desire as a means of salvation?

Appendix B: Reverend Crawford's (2017) Replies

January 25th, 2017
Conversion of St. Paul

Praised be Jesus and Mary,

Dear Your Excellency,

Thank you for the time and experience over the past 6 years with CMRI. I know you told me outside on the steps of the Church that you cannot ordain me due to the issues of Natural Family Planning, and Baptism by Desire and Blood. I don't understand how we can teach people to believe these issues under pain of mortal sin, as if it is a dogma revealed by Jesus Christ.

If NFP and Baptism by desire and blood are the reasons why I am not allowed to be a priest in CMRI, then I willingly accept the consequences. I know seminarians have been sent away before for rejecting NFP, and I pray for perseverance in these times.

I was hoping to speak with you in person and bring everything to a head and finally confirm everything going on since last October, 2016. Also, I wanted to meet one on one to avoid any rumors or things being falsely said. One priest asked me if I was secretly ordained. I was shocked in all honesty and told him, "No I am still a Deacon. Father, you would know if I were ordained; it would be a public thing not a secret to hide from people."

I still hope and pray to be a true priest someday. It won't be a private or "secret Ordination" without people knowing. You know me and my family very well, and I wouldn't "secretively be Ordained" with no proof of validity. My Ordination may be small and without the exterior glory, but it will still have its proof and validity. All in God's timing and under Our Lady's Precious Mantle.

You mentioned that I should request to be lifted from my vows as a Religious with CMRI, and if it's due to the issues of NFP and Baptism by Desire and Blood, then if this is true, I ask now to be suspended from the vows with CMRI.

I don't regret any time or experience with CMRI, and I am grateful for all you've done. I pray every day through Our Lady and Her Rosary that we will not compromise God's Truth, and that we hold to the teachings of the Catholic Church from Christ as He gave them to His Apostles and were spread throughout the world.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, which professes that there is "no salvation outside of the Catholic Church". I believe in one baptism unto the remission of sins, and that the sacraments are necessary for salvation. Whereby baptism with water is a necessary means and condition for salvation, as the Council of Trent states very clearly. One must be in the Church to enter Heaven, and one must also die with sanctifying grace on one's soul. Both are required for salvation.

I am not a "diamond brother" as I have never associated or spoke to them in my life, and as far as I know they "damn everybody" to hell. I am also a sede-vacantist. I have yet to understand what is so extreme by saying God will fulfill His promises and Words.

Luke 21:33 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away."

With prayers and thanksgiving,

Rev. Mr. Dominic Crawford

(Here are the answers point by point to the questions I was sent. I didn't know you were still waiting for a response, as I thought I sent a response in November from Akron. I hope this reaches you in good timing, as I know you are very busy. Thank you, God Bless you, and Mary keep you.)

Praised be Jesus and Mary,

1. We can reject the Protocol Letter from 1949, due to these reasons.

The letter to Bishop Cushing from the Holy Office, signed by Cardinal Marchetti secretary of the Holy Office, was nothing more than a protocol letter # 122/49 to a specific person, in this case to Bishop Cushing of Boston. The letter was never signed by Pope Pius XII, it was never published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* until after Pope Pius XII died, and contradicts itself, as well as a dogma of the Faith.

Arch-Modernist, Karl Rahner, published this letter into Denzinger in 1963, and the letter is used as a source quoted to promote "*salvation by invincible ignorance*" in the Vatican II heretical teachings of *Lumen Gentium*. "But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things;(127) and as Savior wills that all men be saved.(128) Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.(19)*" (Cfr. Epist. S.S.C.S. Officii ad Archiep. Boston.: Denz. 3869-72).

These are the direct quotes from the letter:

"4. We are bound by divine and Catholic faith to believe all those things which are contained in the word of God, whether it be Scripture or Tradition, and are proposed by the Church to be believed...

5. Now among those things which the Church has always preached and will never cease to preach is contained also that infallible statement by which we are taught there is no salvation outside the Church...

8. Now among the commandments of Christ, that one holds not the least place by which we are commanded to be incorporated by baptism into the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church, and to remain united to Christ and His

Vicar, through whom He Himself in a visible manner govern the Church on earth...

10. Not only did the Savior command that all nations should enter the Church, but He also decreed the Church to be a means of salvation without which no one can enter the kingdom of eternal glory."

This letter so far proclaims simply and clearly the dogma of the faith, then comes the following ambiguity and subtle contradiction:

"12..Therefore, that one may obtain eternal salvation, it is not always required that he be incorporated into the Church actually as a member, but it is necessary that he at least be united to her by desire and longing...

13. However, this desire need not always be explicit, as it is in catechumens; but when a person is involved in invincible ignorance, God accepts also an implicit desire, so called because it is included in that good disposition of soul whereby a person wishes his will to be conformed to the will of God."

This is the tool of the modernist as Pope St. Pius X pointed out, write the truth, then add falsity; then add truth. Warp the clear dogmas of the faith into grey and ambiguous meanings which result in rendering the dogma meaningless.

To answer the question concerning the above papal quotes, yes, of course we are bound to accept matters which are not pronounced as dogmas of the Faith. But we are not bound to accept anything that *contradicts* a dogma of the Faith.

For example, we accept guardian angels which have never been a declared "dogma" of the faith, but have always been held and taught by the Church. Guardian angels do not contradict any Popes speaking infallibly, Councils of the Church, and is found in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.

This letter from the Holy office is far below the infallible dogmas of the Church, it contradicts itself by first stating the dogma, "no salvation outside the Catholic Church", then goes on to say we do not need to actually be members in the Church to get to Heaven, thereby denying the teachings from Christ, declared by the Popes, such as the Lateran Council (1215), the bull by Pope Boniface the VIII (1302), and again re-iterated in the Council of Florence by Pope Eugene IV (1438-1445), especially where it states, "...No one, let his

atmorgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved, *unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church.*" No one is in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church, unless they are first baptized and incorporated as members in the Church.

Pope Pius XII stated,

- "Actually only those are to be included as *members* of the Church who have *been baptized and profess the true faith*, and who have not been so unfortunate as to separate themselves from the *unity of the body*, or been *excluded by legitimate authority* for grave faults committed," (Mystic Corporis Christi, 1943)

The Athanasian Creed is also denied by stating we don't have to profess the Catholic Faith explicitly to be saved:

- "Whoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the catholic faith, unless each one preserves this whole and inviolate, he will without a doubt perish in eternity. And the catholic faith is this: That we worship *one God in Trinity*, and Trinity in Unity (etc.) ...Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation, that he also believe faithfully, the *Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ* (etc.) ... Who *suffered for our salvation* (etc.) ... And they that have done good shall go into *life everlasting*; and they that have done evil, into *everlasting fire*. This is the catholic faith, unless everyone believes this faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved."

The four minimum points before one is baptized is stated: 1.) The Trinity 2.) The Incarnation 3.) The Redemption 4.) God rewards and punishes

St. Augustine states, "The saving grace of this religion, the only true religion, through which alone true salvation is truly promised, has never been refused to anyone who was worthy of it; and whoever did lack it was unworthy of it. Consequently, those *who have not heard the Gospel*, and those who, having heard it have not persevered; and those who, *having heard it*, have refused to come to Christ; that is, to believe in Him; *All these have perished in death*; they all go in a single lump to condemnation."

In regards, to justify how we can reject the letter from the holy office, we must conform to the teachings of the Catholic Church from the top-down. That is, from Christ and His words, taught in the Creeds of the Church, proclaimed by the infallible utterances of Popes, and sealed in the Councils of the Church. We must first set forth the dogmas that are forever unchanged, pure, and simple, and then see what the bishops and theologians say. When there is a contradiction somewhere in the Hierarchy of the Church, then the bottom (bishops and theologians) conform to the top (Christ and the dogmas of the Church), not the top to the bottom. If we use the wrong methodology we will get the wrong results, and Christ established a teaching Church which teaches from the top-down.

2. These are the following reasons why Pope Pius XII letter to Midwives can be rejected.

Vatican Council One declared very simply, that the Pope is infallible when speaking: 1.) With his supreme office as doctor and teacher of all Christians 2.) Concerning a matter of faith or morals 3.) Is binding the whole and universal Church. These decisions in themselves are irrevocable. Outside of this criterion, a Pope can make mistakes; this is a clear and simple teaching of the Church, that a Pope as a private teacher can be wrong, even on matters of faith and morals, for example in letters, or teaching to a specific group of people.

Pius XII's letter to midwives is exactly what it's titled. It was a letter to a *group of midwives*, giving his permission to practice rhythm in rare cases. He did not use his supreme authority as teacher of all Christians, he did not bind the whole church, nor was this His final decision. The "intention" of a pope is expressed in his actions, and his action was specifically in a letter to midwives, as he stated.

This is a poor decision made by a Pope, which at that time the fruits of NFP were not fully shown. It contradicts the natural law and the primary purpose of marriage, as established by Christ. If God wants a couple to have a few kids, then that's up to God, and if God wants a couple to have many children, then that's up to God, too. We creatures on our part must cooperate with God's providence, and not hinder it by planning a certain time of intercourse, when the female ovum is 98% non-fertile. This is safer than using contraceptives in our present day.

The miss-conception pill is a pill that prevents the woman from conceiving a child: it is not abortion, but a *form of preventing the conception of a child*. It has a 98% chance that a child will not be conceived, and thereby there is still a 2% chance that a child can be conceived. The marital act is fulfilled "naturally". It's the same principle as NFP. In one the couple follows a time chart (NFP); in the other a pill is taken. Both have 98% chance of not conceiving a child, thereby there is still a 2% chance that a child may be conceived. In both cases, intercourse is fulfilled "naturally." They are both of contraceptive mentality, and there is nothing natural, concerning that which avoids the end and purpose of nature. They are both deliberately intending to avoid conception, by placing their passions and the secondary end of marriage above the primary end, and thereby placing man's will and pleasure above God's providence.

Saints have come from mothers who have died at child-birth. This is the mysterious will and providence of God. We cannot fully comprehend God's plan, but we must accept the natural law and unchanging purpose that God has created for the marital act. It is better to die doing God's will, than to place our trust and pleasure in ourselves.

I know families whom doctors have told they cannot have another child or else the mother will die. Some went on to have 10 kids and others had only a few. They are accepting God's law and surrendering to His providence. If they would have died fulfilling God's Law, then that would have been the will of God. God will not punish His creatures for obeying the nature of marriage as God Himself established.

God is in charge of life and death, and we must do all we can to preserve life, but we cannot overstep the nature and purpose of marriage.

3. Yes, the Council makes a comparison between Penance and Baptism. The comparison is made between Baptism for the unbaptized and Penance for the Baptized. Baptism is still absolutely necessary for *all men* as the Council states, while Penance is relatively necessary for those who have fallen *after Baptism*. To say they are the same type of necessity is to take the comparison of baptism and penance too far.

Baptism is both a necessity of *means* and *precept* for salvation. Penance is just a necessity of *precept*.

Simply, Baptism is a necessary *means* to enter heaven, without it, whether it be one's personal fault or not, no one can enter Heaven. They are lacking a necessary *means* to an end. Baptism is a necessary *means* for an end, namely, salvation.

Penance, is necessary by *precept only*, which means if one does not fulfill the specific requirement, and if they are not to blame for it, then it is all right, as long as there is another way to take care of it.

For example, if a man in the state of mortal sin made a perfect act of love and intended to confess His mortal sin, but died before the priest reached him, he would have died before receiving penance which is necessary by *precept*, it's not a sacrament which is also necessary by *means*.

But if a man died before receiving Baptism, he is lacking a necessary *means* for entering Heaven, and thereby, lacks a special requirement for salvation.

The Council of Trent states that the Sacraments are not of the same type of necessity.

- "If any one shall say, that these seven sacraments are equal to each other in such wise, as that one is not in any way more worthy than another; let him be anathema." (Canon 3)

The Catechism of the Council of Trent states that Baptism is absolutely necessary and Penance is relatively necessary, thereby showing that Penance and Baptism are not of the same type of necessity:

- "All and each of the Sacraments, it is true, possess an admirable efficacy given them by God; but it is well worthy of remark, *that all are not of equal necessity or of equal dignity*, nor is the signification of all the same. Among them three are of paramount necessity, *although in all three this necessity is not of the same kind*. The *universal and absolute necessity of Baptism*, these words of the

Redeemer *unequivocally declare*, 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (36)' *Penance is relative*: Penance is necessary for those only who have stained themselves after Baptism by any mortal guilt. Without sincere repentance, their eternal ruin is inevitable. Orders, too, although not necessary to each of the faithful, are of absolute necessity to the Church as a whole (37)" (36) John, iii., 5.

The desire for penance can only be had in those who are already baptized, and thereby have the mark on their soul:

The Council of Trent, Chapter 2 on Penance states, that the Church has nothing to do with those who are not baptized and thereby Penance is not relevant to them.

- "...since the Church exercises judgment on no one who has not entered it through the *gate of baptism*. For what have I to do, says St. Paul, to *judge them that are without?* (1 Cor. 5: 12) It is otherwise with regard to those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ the Lord has once by the laver of baptism made members of His own body (Ibid 12: 13)."

This is simple theology, no sacraments can be received without first receiving Baptism, thereby being distinguished with the indelible mark on one's soul, and finally being incorporated into the Church as a member.

The Council of Trent immediately after states,

- "For these, if they should *afterward* have defiled themselves by some crime. He wished not to have cleansed by the repetition of Baptism, since that is in no manner lawful in the Catholic Church, but to be placed as culprits before this tribunal that by the sentence of the priests they may be absolved, not only once but as often as is repentant of the sins committed, they should turn themselves thereto." (Sess. XIV on Penance, Chapter 2)

If a soul receives forgiveness of its sins before sacramental confession, it's only true for those who are baptized, because they already have Baptism marked on

their soul. One can be saved without Penance, as a baptized baby, or those who have not lost their baptismal innocence, but none can be saved without Baptism, and therefore, they are not of the same type of necessity.

4. The words speak for themselves, and the desire can give one the state of justification. The Council states that sacramental confession is necessary for salvation, but that a perfect act of contrition can supply the grace of justification before actual confession; this is stated in the Council on the section of Penance.

A perfect act of contrition is only for the baptized, and "if" they died before actual confession, they received both conditions necessary for salvation, that is Baptism and Justification.

Without Baptism, it's what St. Paul said, "For what have I to do with them, to judge them that are without?"

5. This is exactly what the Church teaches. A soul can be justified before the actual reception of the sacrament. As Cornelius, and St. Paul in Acts of the Apostles. Justification takes away original sin, and thereby makes one an heir for heaven. They still must persevere, and receive baptism to be incorporated into the Church.

The hypothetical question of a soul dying justified and not baptized would mean one of two things: 1.) God sends a soul to hell which is in sanctifying grace. *This is a contradiction.* Or 2.) God sends a soul to heaven who is not baptized. *This is a contradiction.* Therefore, obviously, both are required. The soul must be baptized as Christ promised, and the soul must die with sanctifying grace on its soul, both are necessary conditions for salvation. *This is not a contradiction.*

6. Pope Paul III, who approved the Council of Trent on the Canons of Baptism, proves God will provide the saving waters for all who are to enter heaven.

- (Canon 2) "If anyone says that *true* and *natural water* is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,' (10), let him be anathema." (Footnote 10—John 3, 5)

<p>• (Canon 5) "If anyone says that <i>baptism</i> is <i>optional</i>, that is, not necessary for <i>salvation</i> (13), let him be anathema." (Footnote 13–John 3, 5)</p> <p>The Council of Trent took Christ words in John 3, 5 literally. Literal means: without exception, as it is plainly stated, and without metaphor or allegory. When Christ promised that no one can enter heaven without Baptism, He foresaw past, present, and future and He did not make any exceptions. God will fulfill His promises and words because He is God who is <i>omnipotent</i> (all powerful) and <i>omniscient</i> (all knowing).</p>	<p>8. The most the liberals could promote was ambiguity. Canon 737, states that baptism is the door and foundation of all the sacraments, is validly conferred only with water and the proscribed verbal formula. But is necessary in fact or in desire.</p> <p>• "Baptism, the door to and the foundation of the sacraments, necessary for the salvation of all persons in fact or at least in desire, is not validly conferred except through a washing with true, natural water accompanied by the prescribed verbal formula."</p>
<p>What is Baptism by Desire but a metaphor for replacing and substituting water for Baptism, as a requirement made by Christ?</p> <p>Also, in Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 8 and 10, St. Paul and Cornelius, both were <i>justified</i> before Baptism by the vow (desire), and then commanded to be baptized with water for <i>salvation</i>.</p> <p>The very words of Christ testifies that God will bring Baptism to all those who are to enter the kingdom of God.</p>	<p>It's ambiguous because it states baptism is validly conferred only with water and the verbal formula, but yet at the same time desire can suffice for baptism and for <i>salvation</i>, making baptism not necessary, and invalid because there is no matter or form in "desire".</p> <p>The Council of Trent stated that the Vow could give one the grace of <i>justification before</i> receiving the sacrament of Baptism. It then states that one still needs Baptism for <i>salvation</i>.</p> <p>The liberals in canon 737 took two separate sections from the Council of Trent, one speaking on <i>justification</i>, and another for <i>salvation</i> and put them together into one, this is the cause for the ambiguity of the canon.</p>
<p>7. No, Canon Law of its very nature can be changed, and it is not binding the universal Church. It's stated in the preface that the laws can be changed, although, seldom. In the first canon, it states that it is not for the whole church but only for the Latin rite.</p> <p>Thereby, Canon Law is not infallible. It does not meet the criteria for infallibility; it's not taught to the universal Church, and it can be changed and revised. This doesn't mean we shouldn't follow Canon Law, (for they are mostly discipline guidelines of the Church), but it does mean that it is not of infallible criteria and does not override the Council of Trent and the dogmas of the faith.</p>	<p>Compare this canon to the Council of Trent: (Session VI, Chapter IV, on the section of <i>Justification</i>)</p> <p>• "By which words, a description of the Justification of the impious is indicated, as being a translation, from that state wherein man is born a child of the first Adam, to the state of grace, and of the adoption of the sons of God, through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Saviour. And <i>this translation, since the promulgation of the Gospel, cannot be effected, without the laver of regeneration, or the desire thereof, as it is written, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.</i>"</p>
<p>Also, Cardinal Gaspari signed Canon Law, and it was approved by Pope Benedict XV; it was never declared once and for all that these are the irrevocable laws of the Church to be believed by all. It is a heavy and great authority, but it does not supersede Trent, and the infallible declarations of the Popes.</p>	<p>This is singularly and specifically on Justification. This is the very <i>definition of Justification</i>. Again this is not <i>Salvation</i>.</p>

<p>"And this translation..." (Translation of what? The state of justification)</p> <p>"...since the promulgation of the Gospel..." (Therefore, excluding the time before the promulgation of the Gospel)</p> <p>"...cannot be effected..." (That is, the translation of justification cannot be effected or cannot happen without...)</p> <p>"...the laver of regeneration, or the desire thereof..." (The waters of baptism OR the desire for baptism)</p> <p>Again, the Council defined that we have to have the vow (desire), in order to receive the <i>grace of justification</i>, without this vow or desire no one can receive the <i>grace of justification</i>.</p> <p>This is a vow (desire) for baptism, and this could put one into the state of justification.</p> <p>In regards to Baptism, when one is baptized as a necessary means for salvation, one must also have the desire to be baptized. It's a desire <i>for</i> baptism, not what the liberal theologians have taught as being baptized <i>by</i> desire. For there is only <i>one Baptism for salvation</i>, as the Council states, and this is unequivocally defined as baptism with water. (Canons 2 and 5 on Baptism)</p> <p>"Desire" is not the door and foundation of all the sacraments, because one, who has "baptism by desire", cannot receive any sacraments until he is first baptized with water. The "desire <i>for</i> baptism" is good to have, but it is not the same as the <i>act</i> of Baptism.</p> <p>No one can receive Confirmation, go to Confession, receive the Holy Eucharist, receive Extreme Unction, receive Holy Orders, or have a Sacramental Marriage, unless they first enter the door by Baptism.</p> <p>How could someone with "baptism by desire", who does not partake of the Church <i>militant</i> on earth, (and is not able to receive any sacraments or participate in Divine worship), be in the Church <i>triumphant</i> in Heaven?</p>	<p>If baptism by desire can save people, why did St. Martin of Tours raise a catechumen from the dead who was being sentenced to hell, and baptize him immediately?</p> <p>If "good will", "invincible ignorance", and an "implicit desire" can save someone, why would we send missionaries anywhere when God can save them where they are?</p> <p>If the Indians could make perfect acts of love and obtain salvation "by desire", by their "personal sincerity", and by their "non-culpable ignorance", then what would be the purpose of the missionaries such as, St. Isaac Jogues, St. John de Brebeuf, St. Francis Xavier, and many others who went to sacrifice their lives among the savages and pagans, in order to Baptize them and bring them into the true faith?</p> <p>I am sorry but salvation without Baptism, salvation without knowing the true faith, and salvation not as a member of the Catholic Church, is not what the missionaries sacrificed and suffered martyrdom for.</p> <p>The Apostles were never preaching "salvation by desire", because Christ never taught it to them to preach to all nations. He said the opposite, "Go, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost...etc." (Matt. 28: 19)</p> <p>9. The Church did not error in the above canon, but it is somewhat ambiguous, because it places the "act" of Baptism on par with a "desire" for baptism, for <i>salvation</i>. It negates the fact that baptism with water is a necessary means for salvation and the vow or desire, can put one into the state of justification as the Council of Trent explains so clearly.</p> <p>Did Christ error when he stated "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God", which the Council of Trent has defined literally in Canons 2 and 5 on Baptism?</p> <p>10. Why Canon Law permits a catechumen to have a Catholic Burial is not stated. Just because the Church permits people and gives a person a Catholic Burial, does not mean they are in Heaven. Many souls are buried with Catholic burials and in Catholic Cemeteries, who are not in Heaven.</p>
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There is no footnote on this Canon, because there is no previous record or teaching of the Church which permitted such a law. It doesn't give baptism by desire or blood as the reason why a Catechumen is permitted to be buried in a Catholic Cemetery.

In fact, this Canon was previously taught otherwise by the tradition and discipline of the Church. The Council of Braga stated, "Neither the commemoration of Sacrifice (oblations) nor the service of chanting (psallendi) is to be employed for catechumens who have died without baptism."

Certainly, this is not above the infallible statements made by the Popes and Councils, and discipline laws, such as this canon be changed.

11. The previous ritual did not have desire inserted, and again, yes, desire can "lead one" or "put one on the path" to salvation, but one still needs to persevere and be baptized to enter Heaven.

Baptism with water is the *only door and gateway* of the Sacraments and eternal life, because without it, no one is a member of the Church and no one can receive or partake of the other Sacraments.

Again, desire is good to have and necessary, but we need more than "desire". We need sacramental Baptism, as Christ has established as a necessary means for salvation.

The next paragraph of the ritual states, "In the administration of this sacrament, certain requisites are absolutely necessary by divine law, such as matter, form, and minister."

Baptism by "desire" has no matter or form, and is not a sacrament. It would make the sacraments not necessary for salvation, but superfluous, and man could be saved without Christ fulfilling His promise.

Again, Canon 4 in the Council of Trent states very clearly:

- "If any one saith, that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous; and that, without them, or without the desire thereof, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the grace of

justification; though all (the sacraments) are not indeed necessary for every individual; let him be anathema."

It is easier to take this Canon into two parts:

- "If any one saith, that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto *salvation*, but superfluous..."

Simple Meaning: The sacraments are necessary for salvation and are not superfluous. A sacrament is a visible sign, instituted by Christ, which gives grace.

Baptism by desire, is not a sacrament. It has no matter or form. It is not a visible sign, and was not instituted by Christ as one of the seven Sacraments.

If "desire" could bring one to salvation without the sacraments, then the sacraments are not a necessary means for salvation and are superfluous. This is the opposite of what the Canon says.

The Canon continues:

- "...and that, *without them, or without the desire thereof*, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the *grace of justification*; though all are not indeed necessary for every individual; let him be anathema."

Simple Meaning: The sacraments or the desire thereof, may give a soul the grace of *justification*.

Justification is a necessary condition for salvation, but it is *not the only condition*. Baptism with water is also necessary.

The Council then goes on to state that water is necessary for Baptism, and Baptism is necessary for salvation. This necessity is a necessity of means for entering Heaven.

- (Canon 2) "If anyone saith that true and natural water is not necessary for Baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God (10), let him be anathema." (Footnote 10 - John 3, 5)

Simple Meaning: Water is necessary for baptism.

- (Cannon 5) "If anyone saith that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation (13), let him be anathema." (Footnote 13 - John 3, 5)

Simple Meaning: Baptism, a sacrament is necessary for salvation.

There is a distinction between *justification* and *salvation*. They are not one and the same thing. It is not superfluous to distinguish between them because the Council did this very thing.

It states that water baptism is necessary for salvation, and when speaking of justification it states the sacraments or the (vow) desire thereof can suffice.

Salvation is the Beatific Vision. Justification is sanctifying grace.

Salvation is had only when one dies. Justification is obtained in this life.

Salvation can never be taken away. Justification can be lost at any moment.

Salvation is had if one perseveres to the end. No one knows if they will persevere and die with justification.

Because one is *justified*, does not mean one obtains *salvation*. One still must persevere and fulfill the necessary conditions for salvation. The necessary conditions are Baptism, and to die with sanctifying grace on one's soul, **BOTH** are necessary conditions for salvation. Not just one or the other.

The Sacraments work "*Ex opere operatio*" as a Latin phrase meaning "from the work worked". It is referring to sacraments deriving their power from Christ's work rather than the role of humans. The phrase is commonly misunderstood to mean that sacraments work automatically and independently of the faith of the recipient, this is not true.

The "desire" works "*Ex opere operantis*" which refers to the role and value of the recipient's or minister's moral condition in causing or receiving sacramental grace.

We need more than the just the "desire". We need to have faith which is the beginning of all justification, and we also need to have works, which as St. James says, "faith without works is dead." We must also persevere and believe God will bring what He has made necessary for *salvation*. Baptism being one of them. If any of these are lacking, then as the Council of Trent states, "grace is no more grace." For salvation is had by the fulfillment of all the necessary conditions, not only half or most, but all.

These being Baptism, and perseverance in Justification.

12. He could have erred in approving a short explanation of baptism in a ritual, yes, but it still does not follow the consistency of "desire" being sufficient for an "act". It cannot eradicate the Council of Trent, the Council of Florence, the Lateran Council, Pope Boniface's VIII Bull, the Nicene Creed, nor Christ's own words.

13. No, I do not believe the Catechism of the Council Trent is wrong, and I do accept their writings. It reiterates what the Council itself explains, one can be justified (grace and righteousness) by the sacrament or the vow (desire) to receive it. Both go on to teach that baptism with water is necessary for salvation. Both quote Our Lord's own words, simply and literally, "unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Grace and righteousness is from the Latin "iustus-et-uni" meaning justice, and "iustitia, ae", meaning righteous. Justification is exactly what the Council of Trent declared that desire can suffice for, and the Catechism of the Council of Trent also states this. Grace and righteousness (justification) can be had for those who have an ardent vow to receive baptism or from the sacrament itself. Such as Cornelius in Acts of the Apostles Chapter 10, and St. Paul in Chapter 8, both were *justified before baptism, and then baptized* as a necessary condition *for salvation*.

Notice, that the Catechism is speaking on adults, who are not even in the danger of death, and for some unforeseen accident, an adult can be availed to grace and righteousness, that is justification, this is true. Nowhere does this mean that the soul still doesn't need to persevere, and receive Baptism as Christ has promised.

The Council of Trent states otherwise, that no one knows who will persevere to the end in justification and we must pray that God will reward those who diligently seek Him (Session 6, Chapters XII and XIII).

Chapter XIII, on the gift of Perseverance:

- "So, also as regards the gift of perseverance, of which it is written, He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved, which gift cannot be derived from any other but Him, who is able to establish him who standeth that he stand perseveringly, and to restore him who falleth: let no one herein promise himself anything as certain with an absolute certainty; though all ought to place and repose a most firm hope in God's help. *For God, unless men be themselves wanting to His grace, as he has begun the good work, so will He perfect it, working (in them) to will and to accomplish.*"

Perseverance means receiving *all the necessary conditions for salvation*. Justification is one of them, and so is Baptism. If one is justified before Baptism by the vow, one still must persevere and receive Baptism for salvation. The Council is very clear, that once God has begun a good work, He will perfect and accomplish it, as long as no one places obstacles in the way.

If some unforeseen "accident" occurs and someone dies without Baptism, God (who is all knowing and all powerful) knew something, which we did not. Something prevented this soul from receiving what God has deemed necessary for entering Heaven.

Remember, it is never God's grace that is lacking for anyone, but the cooperation and perseverance of man's free will. This is another mystery of the Faith: the cooperation of the free-will of man and God's grace, known better as the "Mystery of Grace."

Also, when we think of an "accident", it's not the same in the eyes of God. For nothing happens by "accident" in God's Divine plan. If God wills someone to be saved, then man must cooperate with the graces given and God will bring Baptism to the soul. Why? Because, God has made it a necessary means for entering Heaven.

And for the record, a catechism can make a mistake, for the Catechism of the Council of Trent quotes St. Thomas's error teaching that the soul is not joined to the body instantaneously when created, but that the soul goes through different stages before it is joined to the body (pg. 43). The Catechism was mistaken, not the Council itself.

And many Catechisms are revised over and over again, especially the Baltimore Catechism here in America, which teaches there are "three baptisms". We know there is only *one baptism*, not three, it's prayed in every creed at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

"Confiteor unum baptismum in remissionem peccatorum. *Ei expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.*"

"And I confess *one baptism unto the remission of sins*. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen."

There is a desire *for* Baptism and this is *for justification*, but *not a desire for salvation* without Baptism with water, for there is one baptism, not three.

14. Yes, I accept the following Encyclical of Pope Pius IX.

They state very clearly, that those who are invincibly ignorant, if they keep the precepts of the natural law, are prepared to obey God, and if they lead a virtuous and dutiful life, can attain eternal life by the *power of divine light and grace*. For God who reads in every detail the minds, souls, and thought of all men, will not permit, by *His infinite goodness and mercy*, anyone who is not guilty of a *voluntary fault to suffer eternal torments*. However, also well-known is the Catholic dogma that no one can be saved outside the Catholic Church, and that those who obstinately oppose the authority and definitions of that Church, and who subornly remain separated from the unity of the Church and from the successor of Peter, the Roman Pontiff, cannot obtain salvation.

The liberals at the time of Pope Pius IX loved this section. They tried to quote this section to prove that God can save people outside of the Catholic Church, *by their invincible ignorance*. This is very sad. The whole point of a person being *invincibly* ignorant proves that God will bring that person what He has made necessary for salvation.

If a person is of *good will* and is found *pleasing before God*, then God through His "*infinite power of divine light and grace*" will not permit these souls to suffer eternal torments. God, will not let these souls die without first baptizing them into His Church, as He has made necessary for entering Heaven.

"*Their inculpable (inimitable) ignorance will not save them*; but if they fear God and live up to their conscience, God, in His infinite mercy, will furnish them with the necessary means of salvation, even so as to send, if needed, an angel to instruct them in the Catholic Faith, rather than let them perish through inculpable ignorance." (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Three things are necessary for a person to be invincibly ignorant: 1.) They must be seeking the truth 2.) They must be willing and ready to accept the truth, wherever they find it, and at whatever cost 3.) They try their best to know their duty and pray to God for light and direction

There is an example of the invincible ignorant native found in Holy Scripture. God has already showed us what He has done with such a soul. Chapter 8, ver. 26-40, of Acts of the Apostles details this very thing. There was the a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch, under Candace the Queen of Ethiopia, who was a man of good will and was found pleasing before the Lord. God sent an angel to Philip the Deacon, and told him to go out into the desert of Gaza. He obeyed, and found the eunuch riding in a chariot. He was inspired and taught the eunuch concerning Christ and the Scriptures. They came by water and he was baptized as a necessary means for salvation. Then, Philip the Deacon was immediately taken away by the spirit of the lord.

If Baptism by Desire was sufficient for salvation, why didn't the angel preach to the eunuch himself, instead of sending Philip to instruct and Baptize him?

Why didn't God let the man of good will live a life of invincible ignorance according to the natural law, and die without Baptism, and therefore be saved outside of the Catholic Church?

Are the sacraments now only for those people who "are able" to receive them, and whom God can reach without any "*inconvenience*"?

Are the sacraments not necessary for the invincible ignorant, whom God in His *infinite power and mercy* promised He will bring, as He has made necessary for salvation?

God will always fulfill His promises and words. God can do whatever He so wills. BUT God will not work outside of His promises, for then we would have a changing God, and man could not even hold God to the veracity of His own words. As Christ states, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21: 33)

15. St. Thomas is a human being who wrote his opinions on the teachings of the Church. He expounded on many areas of the faith which were not yet defined clear and simple, and he wrote with his own personal knowledge. Not all of St. Thomas's teachings are perfect, and they are capable being wrong.

With all due respects, to this great Saint, we simply reject his opinion and teaching that "desire" can be sufficient for an "act".

St. Thomas also taught erroneously that Our Lady was conceived *WITHOUT* original sin, because he was not enlightened to understand otherwise. He did this amidst traditions already established in the Church teaching the Immaculate Conception.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception originated in the East about the 8th Century, where it was celebrated on December 9th. The Feast in the Latin Rite appeared first in England in the 11th Century, and was included in the universal Church Calendar in the 14th Century.

St. Thomas wrote his contrary opinion, some 500 years after this great feast was originally celebrated in the East, and around 200 years after it appeared in the West. As a matter of fact, St. Bernard of Clairvaux forbid his monks to preach the Immaculate Conception because he felt the opinion to be too extreme. By what right did St. Thomas and many other theologians propose their erroneous *opinion*, despite tradition from the Fathers, feasts already observed, and the general belief of the faithful during those times? "By the right" of being human beings who can and have been wrong before. They were not preaching and teaching this under anathema, as it is being done in our present days.

Why the Church did not condemn him for writing such a teaching? Because he is a human being, who simply wrote his opinion. He never bound anyone to believe his writings or else anathema. As a matter of fact, he stopped writing the *Summa Theologica* on December 6, 1273, the Feast of St. Nicholas, because he had a vision of Heaven and afterwards said, "Such things have been revealed to me that all I have written seems to me as so much straw. Now I await the end of my life." He died three months later.

The Council of Trent used two books for their main references, The Bible and St. Thomas's *Summa Theologica*. They were fully aware of St. Thomas's teaching on Baptism of Desire and Blood for salvation.

The Council defined otherwise, and stated that water is necessary for Baptism and Baptism is necessary for salvation, read canons 2 and 5 again. The Council defined that the vow or desire can put one into the state of justification (canon 4), but one still needs to persevere and be baptized as a necessary condition for entering Heaven.

No one can explain the motives and minds of the Popes, and why they didn't condemn St. Thomas's false teachings. It's the same reason why they didn't condemn him for teaching falsely on the Immaculate Conception.

Or why they didn't condemn St. Gregory Nazianzen, who was explicitly against Baptism by desire?

Or condemn St. Augustine, who retracted what he stated in his earlier writings against the Donatist on baptism by desire, and later when speaking to the Pelagians said, "Perish the thought that a person predestined to eternal life could be allowed to end his life without the sacrament of the mediator."

Or condemn St. Francis Xavier, who wrote a letter requesting for more missionaries, because of all the souls that go to hell without the true faith, and nowhere mentioned people being saved by desire.

Or for that matter, why didn't three Popes over the span of 41 years not consecrate Russia to Mary's Immaculate Heart, with all the Bishops in the world, as she requested?

Or why did Adam and Eve have to eat from the apple in the beginning?

We cannot teach the faith from why the Popes didn't condemn a Saint for their own speculative theology, for it is understood that Saints are in Heaven for their sanctity, and not for every word they taught.

But we *can teach* what the Popes have taught for all to believe: One being the dogma, "No Salvation Outside of the Catholic Church", and another being Baptism, as a necessary means for salvation.

There is a saying a priest told me, "All the Doctors of the Church had at least one heresy in their life, the only ones that didn't, were the ones that didn't write anything."

We do not learn our theology directly from the Fathers or Doctors, any more than we learn our religion directly from the Bible. We learn our religion from the Church through her Magisterium which is guided and protected by the Holy Ghost. As Queen Isabella said to her confessor as he attempted to answer a question she had presented to him, "Father, I do not want to know what the Fathers said, good as they were. I want to know what the Church says."

16. The Pope approved of the opinions of St. Alphonsus, does this mean St. Alphonsus is protected by infallibility and that he cannot be wrong? Of course not. The Pope said that his writings can be perused by the faithful with perfect safety. He was a moral theologian, not a dogmatic theologian, and again it's his own personal opinion. Does this mean he is a heretic for declaring his opinion of what he thinks the theological degree for baptism of desire is? No, he is a canonized saint who is in heaven because he lived and died a holy life. Not every word he utters is infallible and he gave his opinion that Baptism by desire is "de fide".

St. Alphonsus was also in the years of the "revolutions." He died immediately before the French Revolution, and was not permitted to enter his own order. The fact that liberalism was already in the clergy and around the people shows the mindset of the times. St. Alphonsus opinion could have been abused, misconstrued, or over-exploited.

But again, no one can re-interpret a dogma, because a dogma reads for itself for all to hold with a simple and humble faith.

17. It should be good to note that Christ does not always teach what not to do, but He tells us what we must do to gain eternal life. "Not everyone that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 7: 21)

These statements by Popes and Councils say what one must do to gain eternal life:

The Council of Florence:

- "*Holy baptism, which is the gateway to the spiritual life, holds the first place among all the sacraments; through it we are made members of Christ and of the body of the Church. And since death entered into the universe through the first man, "unless we are born of water and the Spirit, we cannot" as the Truth says, "enter into the kingdom of heaven"* (cf. John 3:5). The matter of this sacrament is real and natural water; it makes no difference whether cold or warm. The form is: I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost..." (Denz. 696)

The Nicene Creed prayed at Mass:

- "...And I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess *one baptism for the remission of sins*. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen."

Notice, if one believes baptism by desire can save you, then one rejects the Nicene Creed where it states, "*one baptism* for the remission of sins".

"Baptism by desire" would make "two baptism" for the remission of sins, or even worse as the Baltimore Catechism teaches, that there are "three baptisms"; water, blood, or desire, which all can suffice for salvation. Making "one baptism" equal with "three baptisms". No longer is it a *desire for Baptism for justification*, as the Council of Trent teaches, but it is *Baptism by desire for salvation*, as the Baltimore Catechism teaches.

The Council of Trent:

- (Canon 2) "If anyone says that *true and natural water is not necessary for baptism* and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (10), let him be anathema." (Footnote 10 - John 3, 5)

- (Canon 5) "If anyone says that *baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation* (13), let him be anathema." (Footnote 13 - John 3, 5)

"Profession of Faith" from the Council of Trent

- "...I confess *one baptism for the remission of sins*, and I await the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen..."
- "...I also profess that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and *necessary for the salvation of mankind*, although not all are necessary for each individual; these sacraments are baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, order, and matrimony; ..."

The Bull "Unam Sanctam" (Denz. 468)

- "Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins, as the Spouse in the Canticles proclaims: "One is my dove, my perfect one. She is the only one, the chosen of her who bore her." (Cant. 6: 8); and she represents one sole mystical body whose Head is Christ and the head of Christ is God [1 Cor. 11: 3]. In her then is *one Lord, one faith, one baptism* [Eph. 4: 5]. There had been at the time of the deluge only one ark of Noah, prefiguring the one Church, which ark, having been finished to a single cubit, had only one pilot and guide, Noah, and we read that, outside of this ark, all that subsisted on the earth was destroyed."

Scripture	
Mark 16: 16, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned."	
John 3: 5, "Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, <i>unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost</i> , he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."	
Matthew 28: 19, "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, <i>baptizing them</i> in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."	
Ephesus 4: 5, "One body and one Spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling, <i>One Lord, one faith, one baptism</i> ."	
Acts 2: 38, "But Peter said to them: Do penance, and <i>be baptized</i> every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."	
Acts 2: 41, "They therefore that received his word, <i>were baptized</i> ; and there were added in that day about three thousand souls."	
Acts 22: 16, "And now why tarriest thou? Rise up, and <i>be baptized</i> , and wash away thy sins, invoking his name."	
Romans 6: 3, "Know you not that all we, who are <i>baptized in Christ Jesus</i> , are baptized in his death?"	
Romans 6: 4, "For we are buried together with him <i>by baptism into death</i> : that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also many walk in newness of life."	
1 Corinthians 12: 13, "For as the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit <i>were we all baptized into one body</i> , whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and in one Spirit we have all been made to drink."	
Galatians 3: 27, "For as many of you as have <i>been baptized in Christ</i> , have put on Christ."	
1 Peter 3: 21, "Whereunto <i>baptism being of the like form, now saveth you also</i> : not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the examination of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."	
(All the footnotes for these quotes from the Douay Rheims Bible with the Rev. George Haydock commentary do not mention a word about baptism by desire or blood)	
18. Can all or most of the theologians and bishops be wrong? Yes, this is a true statement. Christ promised protection to His Church, and He established His Church upon Peter (Matt. 16: 18), and further established it into a hierarchical society. Christ, has guided His Church to last till the end of time, as He has promised, "...the gates of hell will not prevail against it." The Church is always to remain free from error, for the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ and the spouse of the Holy Ghost.	
From the top - down, is the Hierarchy of the Church. It started from Christ, who established Peter and his successors as the visible head, all who have certain conditions protecting them with infallibility, as stated in Vatican Council I. Then, to the Bishops in union with the Pope at a General Council, and lastly to the Bishops, theologians, and popes speaking as private individuals, on the bottom.	
This bottom group is not guaranteed to be free from making mistakes, for they can agree and expound on the dogmas, but can never over-step or rise above them. What they hold has to be tested by the hierarchical structure of the Church starting from the top - down.	
Baptism of desire and blood contradict Christ's words, (which the Council of Trent has held literally), they contradict the infallible statements of the Popes, specifically, "No Salvation Outside of the Catholic Church", and therefore, having to enter into the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church to be saved (Pope Eugene, Council of Florence). They contradict the Athanasian Creed, which states that unless one holds the Catholic Faith they cannot be saved. They also contradict Papal infallibility, because they place bishops and theologians on par with Pope's speaking infallibly, and put the method of "majority rules" as their theological reasoning.	

In the Arian heresy *the majority of theologians and bishops* went along with the teachings of Arianism, *especially after* it was condemned at the Council of Nicaea in 325. It was condemned again in 381 at the Council of Constantinople, and the Arians still did not go away. It took almost 300 years to completely rid the Arians. St. Athanasius said in the 4th Century, "They have the buildings, but we have the Faith." St. Hermenegild (April 13) was killed from his father who was king of the Visigoths, for not receiving communion from an Arian Bishop in 585 A.D.

In the 1500's *the majority of theologians and bishops* went along with the Church of England following King Henry VIII, except St. John Fisher, St. Thomas Moore, and a minority of others who died for the faith.

In the 1600's *the majority* of France was lost to the teachings of Gallicanism, through the clergy.

In the 1800's *the majority* of the Catholic Clergy in America, started on a compromise in the faith and it started through religious liberty. Cardinal Gibbons and Bishop Carol, struggled to keep the faith pure and simple due to pressure of liberal Catholics and non-Catholics. In 1899, American Clergy were sent a letter from Pope Leo XIII "Testum Benevolentiae", concerning "Americanism". It is defined as the lessening and weakening of the Catholic Faith, so others can join it more easily, and refraining from teaching the dogmas of the faith as they are whole and entire.

Man has free will and can choose to be for Christ and His Church or not, and this is between him and God. It has happened before throughout the history of the Church, when *the majority of the clergy* went away from the simplicity of the faith and lost sight of the dogmas.

There is a spiritual battle of satan vs. Our Lady, and since the beginning of time satan has one last dogma to change and destroy. It's to dethrone the Catholic Church of Salvation, that, a person does not need sacramental baptism and therefore, does not need to receive the mark on one's soul and therefore, does not need to be a member of the Catholic Church to be saved and therefore, ultimately doesn't need the Power of the Catholic Church. If satan can destroy this dogma, then he has lowered the Catholic Church to "just another church". The Catholic Church will no longer be necessary and will no longer be a visible

society made up of visible members, using the same visible sacraments, and held under the same visible head, all worshipping the same God (although, the See is vacant since Vatican II). If satan can destroy this dogma by using "desire" to replace the actual reception of the sacraments, and membership in the Church, then he has succeeded in destroying the Church itself. Of course, this is impossible; for Christ, has promised to be with us till the end of time and that the gates of hell will not prevail against it. This is a solemn promise that Christ has bound Himself to fulfill, just as He has promised no one will enter into heaven unless they are baptized. Yes, God can do what He wants, but He will not break His promises and words.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21: 33)

"Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3, 5)

Appendix C: Reverend Crawford's (2018) Untitled Booklet



"And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to him: and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him. And behold a voice from heaven, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
(Matthew Ch.3 16-17)

Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council (1215):

"One indeed is the universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved."

Pope Leo IV, Council of Valence III (855):

"All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit (John 3, 5), and through this are truly incorporated into the Church."

Praised be Jesus and Mary

To Your Excellency and to Whom It May Concern:

This is the third time I have responded to the questions you sent me in October 2016. I retained copies of the responses including receipts from the post office with tracking numbers. I trust you received them. I continue to pray that we will come together to discuss the *simple* Catholic Faith. Please know that I do not make this a personal battle against you or CMRI, and I do not “throw dirt” or tell lies about you to other people.

Also, please understand that I was trained under your guidance for many years and I grew up under the CMRI. Up until your questions you sent me in October 2016 (which were in response to a letter I had written to you), I had only studied what was given to us in the Seminary with regards to Church teaching. I was taught and, therefore, under the impression that one could be “justified by desire”. This was due to not looking at the entire teachings of the Catholic Church and not understanding the relationship or meaning of the words “cause” (Sess. VI, Ch. 7) and “cannot be effected” (Sess. VI, Ch. 4) in the Council of Trent.

It is a matter of Catholic faith that 1) the Sacraments (an outward, visible sign) are necessary to all people for salvation, 2) the Sacrament of Baptism is the only way to be marked as a Catholic and to become a member of the Catholic Church, and 3) a person must be a member of the Catholic Church in order to be saved. You are deceiving people about the truth when you continue to teach otherwise.

As Pope Pius IX said in 1854:

“As long as we are on earth, weighed down by this mortal mass which blunts the soul, let us hold most firmly that, in accordance with Catholic teaching, there is ‘one God, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4: 5); it is not permitted to seek further.”

Responses to Your Questions

1. **Question:** Is it permitted for a Catholic to deny the teaching of the Holy Office Letter of 1949, approved by Pius XII, which teaches salvation through baptism by desire for those who are not actually members of the Church?

Answer: Yes, we must reject the Protocol Letter from 1949 because it contradicts a defined Dogma of the Faith. We are not strictly obliged to believe *only* in the Dogmas of the Church because not everything has been defined as a Catholic Dogma. However, we are *never obliged to accept anything that contradicts a defined Dogma of the Faith*.

Catholics are obliged to accept the Catholic Faith whole and entire:

Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), *Ad beatissimi* (1914):

“The nature of the Catholic faith is such that nothing can be added, nothing taken away. Either it is held in its entirety or it is rejected totally. This is the Catholic faith which, unless a man believes faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.” (PTC, 761)

We are obliged under pain of damnation to accept the Dogmas of the Catholic Church. A Dogma of the Catholic Church is defined once and for all and a Dogma reads as it was once defined.

Pope Pius IX, Vatican Council I defined in 1870:

“The doctrine of the faith which God has revealed has not been proposed to human intelligences to be perfected by them as if it were a philosophical system, but as a divine deposit entrusted to the Spouse of Christ to be faithfully guarded and infallibly interpreted. Hence the sense, too, of the sacred dogmas is that which our *Holy Mother the Church has once declared*, nor is this sense ever to be abandoned on plea or pretext of a more profound comprehension of the truth.” (Constitution, *Dei Filius*, Chapter IV.)

Brief History

The letter to Archbishop Cushing signed by Cardinal Marchetti, Secretary of the Holy Office, was nothing more than a Protocol Letter # 122/49 to a "specific person," in this case to Archbishop Cushing of Boston. The letter was never signed by Pope Pius XII; it was never published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* until after Pope Pius XII died; and it contradicts itself as well as a Dogma of the Faith.

Arch-Modernist Karl Rahner published this letter in *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* by Denzinger in 1963, and the letter is used as a source quoted to promote "*salvation by invincible ignorance*" in the Vatican II heretical teachings of *Lumen Gentium*:

"But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God, for it is He who gives to all men life and breath and all things,(127) and as Savior wills that all men be saved.(128) Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.(19*)" (Cfr. Epist. S.S.C.S. Officii ad Archiep. Boston.: Denz. 3869-72).

We do not accept Vatican II because it contradicts defined Dogmas of the Catholic Church, namely, that through the Sacrament of Baptism we are marked as a Catholic and we must be a member of the Catholic Church to be saved. Vatican II also contradicts Divine Law through the uprooting of the First Commandment.

The same holds true regarding the Protocol Letter from Cardinal Marchetti to Archbishop Cushing in Boston. The Protocol Letter contradicts itself by first stating a Dogma of the Faith, "there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church," and then seven paragraphs later, teaches we do not actually need to be a member of the Catholic Church to get to Heaven.

The Protocol Letter to Archbishop Cushing that you proclaim we are obliged to accept contradicts:

A. Pope Leo IV (847-55), Council of Valence III (855):

"All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit (John 3, 5), and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

B. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence; Decree for the Armenians (1439):

"Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments because it is the gateway to the spiritual life. By it we are made members of Christ and His Body, the Church. And since death entered the universe through the first man, 'unless we are reborn of water and the Spirit, we cannot,' as the Truth says, 'enter the kingdom of Heaven' (John.3:5)."

(Denz. 696)

C. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Can. 2):

"If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit' (Jn. 3:5): let him be anathema."

(Denz. 858)

D. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Can. 5):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."

(Denz. 861)

E. Pope St. Leo the Great, Council of Chalcedon I (451):

"There are three that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one" (*I John 5:8*). This means the Spirit of sanctification, and the blood of redemption, and the water of Baptism, which **three things are one and remain undivided, and not one of them is separated from union with the others.**"

F. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

"Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is "one God and one faith" (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Denz. 482)

G. Pope Julius III, Council of Trent (1551), Session on Penance, Chapter 4:

"The Church exercises judgment on no one who has not first entered it through the gateway of baptism. For, what have I, saith the apostle, to do to judge them that are without? It is otherwise with those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ our Lord has once, by the laver of baptism, made the members of His own body." (Denz. 895)

* Please note, the Church does not judge (forgive) those who are without baptism; people who have not received the Sacrament of Baptism (which requires water) cannot receive the Sacrament of Penance (even by an act of perfect contrition). They are not members of the Church; they are already condemned to hell (to some degree). Then it states that it is *otherwise* for those who are of the household of the faith, i.e. the ones who have received the laver (water) of baptism are made members of His own body.

H. Pope Pius XII, Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943):

"Christ indicated Baptism as the means whereby future believers were to be grafted on the Body of the Church... Finally, on the tree of the Cross He won for Himself His Church, that is, all the members of His Mystical Body, who are incorporated in this Mystical Body by the waters of Baptism through the saving virtue of this Cross." (PTC. 1027, 1030)

I. Pope St. Innocent I (401-17) declared:

"That the rewards of eternal life are given without Baptism is very foolish". (Epistle 29)

J. Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mystici Corporis* (1943):

"Through the waters of Baptism those who are born into this world dead in sin are not only born again and made members of the Church, but being sealed with a spiritual character they become able and fit to receive the other sacraments."

K. Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mystici Corporis* (1943):

"Only those are to be considered real members of the Church who have been regenerated in the waters of Baptism, and profess the true Faith... Consequently, as in the real assembly of the faithful there can be only one Body, one Lord, and one Baptism." (Denz. 2286)

L. Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mediator Dei* (1947):

"Baptism is the distinctive mark of *all* Christians, and serves to differentiate them from those who have not been cleansed in this purifying stream and *consequently are not members of Christ.*"

M. Pope Pius XI, *Quas Primas* (December 11, 1925):

"The Catholic Church, is the kingdom of Christ on earth.... The gospels present this kingdom as one which men prepare to enter by penance, and cannot actually enter except by faith and by baptism, which through an external rite, signifies and produces an interior regeneration."

N. Pope Leo XIII, *Adiutricem*, On the Rosary, (1895):

"Through you, O Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, the Apostles have preached salvation to the nations; through you the demons have been put to rout and mankind has been summoned back to Heaven; through you every misguided creature held in the thrall of idols is led to recognize the truth; through you have the *faithful been brought to the laver of holy Baptism* and churches been founded among every people."

O. The Athanasian Creed:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic faith is this: That we worship *one God in Trinity*, and Trinity in Unity . . . Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the *Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ* . . . Who *suffered for our salvation* . . . And they that have done good shall go into *life everlasting*; and they that have done evil, into *everlasting fire*. This is the Catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved."

P. Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council (1215):

"One indeed is the universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved."

Q. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, (1441):

"It firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart 'into everlasting fire which was prepare for the devil and his angels' (Matt. 25: 41), unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgivings, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed his blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church." (Denz. 714)

R. Pope Pius IX, Unam Sanctam (1302):

“Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins...In her then is ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4:5).”

- 2. Question: In the light of the same above papal quotes, do you believe a Catholic can reject Pius XII's teaching on Natural Family Planning which was published in the official Acta Apostolicae Sedis? If so, what are your reasons and what theologians can you quote who teach that you can reject such papal teaching?**

Answer: Yes, all Catholics are obliged to obey Divine Law above the teachings, laws, and authority of man. Divine Law teaches that the primary end of marriage is the procreation of children, and the secondary end is the mutual love of the spouses. The Church has defined that the secondary end (conjugal fidelity) can never supersede the primary end (procreation of children). To reverse the order is to destroy the Natural Law and puts the control of procreation in the hands of man. John G. Murray, Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, from 1931 to 1956, is an example of a bishop who publicly denounced the sinful and malodorous rhythm method.

Pope Pius XI stated in the encyclical “*Casti Connubii*”, 1930:

“To take away the natural and primeval right of marriage, or in **any way to circumscribe the chief purpose of marriage established in the beginning by the authority of God, is not within the power of any law of man.** . . . Thus the child holds the first place among the blessing of marriage. Clearly the Creator of the human race Himself, who because of His kindness wished to use men as helpers in propagating life, taught this in Paradise, when He instituted marriage, saying to our first parents, and through them to all spouses: ‘Increase and Multiply and fill the earth’ (Gen. 1: 28).”

"Indeed, some vindicate themselves for this criminal abuse on the ground that they are tired of children and wish merely to fulfill their desires without the consequent burden; others on the ground that they can neither observe continence, nor because of difficulties of the mother or of family circumstances cannot have offspring...Any use of the marriage act, in the exercise of which it is designedly deprived of its natural power of procreating life, infringes on the law of God and of nature, and those who have committed any such act are stained with the guilt of serious sin."

"But no reason however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, **those who in exercising it deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious.**"

"No difficulty can arise that justifies the putting aside of the law of God which forbids all acts intrinsically evil. There is no possible circumstance in which husband and wife cannot, strengthened by the grace of God, fulfill faithfully their duties and preserve in their wedlock their chastity unspotted. This truth of Christian Faith is expressed by the teaching of the Council of Trent: "Let no one be so rash as to assert that which the Fathers of the Council have placed under anathema, namely that there are precepts of God impossible for the just to observe. God does not ask the impossible, but by His commands, instructs you to do what you are able, to pray for what you are not able that He may help."

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL
CHANCERY OFFICE
344 DAYTON AVENUE
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA



February 10, 1940.

My dear Mrs. Vashro:

Both your letters to me as well as the letter you sent Father Reardon last year concerning the program of Father Le Beau at Seton Guild are most praiseworthy.

As soon as I read your letter last year I explained to Father Le Beau that he was acting contrary to a prohibition I had imposed on all the clergy of the Archdiocese three years ago when the notorious and malodorous Rhythm System was gaining publicity out of Chicago. I also forbade the Catholic book-sellers to have the pamphlet for sale.

If you have the time to go to the course again at Seton Guild and any reference is made by any speaker to the Rhythm System favorably you will do a service to religion if you arise and say that you have been commissioned by the Archbishop to denounce the speaker publicly be he priest or layman.

With best wishes, I remain

Very faithfully yours,

[Signature]
Archbishop of Saint Paul.

Mrs. R. A. Vashro,
Glen Lake, Minnesota.

Natural Family Planning (NFP) follows the same mentality and purpose of the birth control pill (the Pill), but without the abortive effect. Simply said, NFP never *kills* any babies, but it *deliberately tries to prevent their conception*. Both NFP and the Pill are intended to avoid conception of a child. Only in rare cases is a child still conceived through NFP or the Pill.

Even if the Pill were not *also* an “abortifacient”, it *still* contradicts nature and God’s establishment for the marital act. It is a form of contraception that can be used to purposely avoid the primary end of the marital act, i.e. the procreation of children.

I will never forget in class when you told us that Marquette University has become so exact with their Natural Family Planning method, that there is now a 99 percent chance that a child will *not* be conceived. It is absolutely wrong to take the place of God with life and death. Married Couples must be surrendered to God’s Perfect Will and not plan when they will or will not conceive a child, but instead leave all to God and God alone.

You know better than I, that there have been many Saints whose mothers have died at birth, yet that was the Perfect Will of God.

Excerpt from **The Secret of the Rosary** by St. Louis De Montfort:

“Blanche of Castille, Queen of France, was deeply grieved because twelve years after her marriage she was still childless. When St. Dominic went to see her, he advised her to recite her rosary every day and to ask God for the grace of motherhood; she faithfully carried out his advice. In 1213, she gave birth to her eldest child, Philip, but the child died in infancy. The Queen’s fervor was nowise dulled by this disappointment; on the contrary, she sought Our Lady’s help more than ever before. Thus, in 1215, Saint Louis was born – the Prince who was to become the glory of France and the model of all Christian Kings.”

Do we think St. Dominic would have advised Blanche Queen of France to practice NFP so she could bear a child? No, he would have told her today, as he did then, that the Rosary and perseverance would bring her God’s will. And God’s will was to bless her with a child who became Saint Louis, King of France.

3. **Question:** The Council of Trent says that Penance and Baptism are necessary for salvation in the same way: "This sacrament of penance is for those who have fallen after baptism necessary for salvation, as baptism is for those who have not yet been regenerated." (Penance, Chapter 2). If Penance and Baptism are of the same type of necessity according to the Council, how do you deny that a desire can suffice for Baptism, too?

Answer: The Sacraments are not all equal, and all the Sacraments are not necessary to enter Heaven. No one can be saved without the Sacrament of Baptism because it is a necessary *means* to be saved, but people *can* be saved without Penance because it is not a necessary means for salvation but of *precept*.

A. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, Canon 3 on the Sacraments, (1547):

"If any one shall say, that these seven sacraments are equal to each other in such wise, as that one is not in any way more worthy than another; let him be anathema."

B. The Catechism of the Council of Trent:

"All and each of the Sacraments, it is true, possess an admirable efficacy given them by God; but it is well worthy of remark, **that all are not of equal necessity or of equal dignity**, nor is the signification of all the same. Among them three are of paramount necessity, **although in all three this necessity is not of the same kind**. The universal and absolute necessity of Baptism, these words of the Redeemer unequivocally declare, 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (36)' Penance is relative: Penance is necessary for those only who have stained themselves after Baptism by any mortal guilt. Without sincere repentance, their eternal ruin is inevitable. Orders, too, although not necessary to each of the faithful, are of absolute necessity to the Church as a whole. (36) John, iii."

4. How do you interpret these words differently in relation to Penance, allowing salvation to one who dies without confession but after making a perfect act of contrition with the desire for Penance? If the words are so absolute in your mind, how can they admit of desire in relation to Penance?

Answer: Please, read the answer to Question 3 again. The Sacraments of Baptism and Penance are both necessary for salvation, but they are not of equal necessity.

The Council states that we can regain **justification after Baptism through Penance** or “at least a desire for it.” However, concerning anyone’s **initial and first justification**, the Council defined that no one can be justified without the **Sacrament of Baptism**, which is the Sacrament of Faith, because through Baptism, Supernatural Faith, Hope, and Charity are infused into a soul, thereby making a soul justified and uniting it perfectly with Christ, as a member of the Church. Without Supernatural Faith, Hope, and Charity, which are brought through the Sacrament of Baptism, no one has ever been justified.

(For Penance)

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent:

“Those who through sin have forfeited the received grace of justification (after baptism) can again be justified when, moved by God, they exert themselves to obtain through the sacrament of penance the recovery of the grace lost. . . .Hence, it must be taught that the **repentance of a Christian after his fall is very different from that at his baptism**, and that it includes . . . also the **sacramental confession of those sins, at least in desire**, to be made in its season....”

(For Baptism)

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent:

“The instrumental cause (of justification) is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the “sacrament of faith,” without which no man was ever justified.” (Denz. 799)

(Faith, Hope, and Charity brought through the Sacrament of Baptism)

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent:

“Hence man through Jesus Christ, into Whom he is ingrafted (at Baptism), receives in the said justification together with the remission of sins, the **gifts of faith, hope and charity, all infused at the same time.** For faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, nor makes him a living member of His body . . . This faith, in accordance with Apostolic Tradition, catechumens beg of the Church before the Sacrament of Baptism, when they ask for “faith which bestows eternal life,” which without hope and charity faith cannot bestow.” (Denz. 800)

Notice, Catechumens *beg before baptism* for the *Faith* that gives eternal life that they receive **at** their baptism. They beg for Supernatural Faith because they cannot receive Supernatural Faith (necessary for salvation) without the Sacrament of Baptism. This Supernatural Faith (which includes Hope and Charity) is brought through the **Sacrament of Baptism**, which is the **instrumental cause** for our **first justification**.

Before Catechumens receive the Sacrament of Baptism they have a *natural faith*. They received “faith by hearing” as a necessary **preparation** for justification. This is a natural faith. They know a natural faith cannot save them because Heaven is Supernatural, and they begin to beg the Church for **Supernatural Faith, which is brought through the Sacrament of Baptism**.

The Sacrament of Baptism is the tool that God ordained to first bring Supernatural Faith into our soul. Without Supernatural Faith no one has ever been justified. *This is basic Catholic Teaching.*

- 5. If you say baptism of desire justifies a man but does not allow him to be saved, how do you explain God sending a man to hell who has been justified and is, therefore, in the state of grace?**

Answer: You cannot first receive justification without the Sacrament of Baptism. No one is first justified without Faith, Hope, and Charity, and no one initially receives Faith, Hope, and Charity without the Sacrament of Baptism. This is why the Sacrament of Baptism is referred to as the “Sacrament of Faith” because it brings us Supernatural Faith with Hope and Charity for the first time.

1. The Sacrament of Baptism infuses Supernatural Faith.
2. Supernatural Faith includes Hope, and Charity.
3. This is the Faith that gives eternal life that Catechumens ask for before they are baptized. They ask because they don't have Supernatural Faith yet.

* **When** one receives the Sacrament of Baptism, he receives Supernatural Faith, Hope, and Charity "at the same time" (if he places no obstacles in his way).

Baptism removes Original sin, marks us as a Catholic, and infuses sanctifying grace into our soul along with the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity for the first time. These are all effects of the Sacrament of Baptism.

A. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"The effect of this sacrament is the remission of every sin, original and actual, also of every punishment which is due to the sin itself. For this reason, no satisfaction is to be enjoined on the baptized for their past sins." (Denz. 696)

B. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, *Decree on Original Sin* (1546):

"If anyone denies that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in Baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away, but is only brushed over and or not imputed: let him be anathema." (Denz. 792)

C. Pope Innocent III, Solemn Profession of Faith Prescribed to the Waldensians (1208):

"And we believe that all sins are remitted in baptism, the original sin which has been contracted as well as those committed voluntarily." (Denz. 424)

D. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"For through Baptism we are spiritually reborn." (Denz. 695)

E. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1312):

"All the faithful must profess only one baptism which *regenerates all* who are baptized in Christ just as "one God and one faith..." (Denz. 482)

F. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, *Cantata Domino* (1441):

"The Sacrament of Baptism... through which we are snatched from the domination of the Devil and adopted among the sons of God." (Denz. 712)

G. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, *Decree on Original Sin* (1546), Ch. 5:

"God hates nothing in the regenerated because there is no condemnation for those truly buried with Christ by means of Baptism into death (Rom.6:4), but putting off the old man and putting on the new man which was created according to God (Eph.4:22 ff; Col.3:9 f), are made innocent, without stain, pure, guiltless and beloved sons of God..." (Denz.792)

H. Pope Innocent III, *Apostolic Letter on Baptism* (1201):

"But through the Sacrament of Baptism the guilt of one made red by the Blood of Christ is remitted, and to the kingdom of Heaven one also arrives, whose gate the Blood of Christ has mercifully opened for the faithful." (Denz. 410)

I. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, *Decree for the Greeks* (1439):

"It is likewise defined that the souls of those, who after the reception of Baptism have incurred no stain of sin at all, when released from the same bodies are immediately received into heaven, and see clearly the one and Triune God Himself as He is..." (Denz. 693)

J. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence; *Decree for the Armenians* (1439):

"Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments because it is the gateway to the spiritual life. By it we are made members of Christ and His Body, the Church. And since death entered the universe through the first man, 'unless we are reborn of water and the Spirit, we cannot,' as the Truth says, 'enter the kingdom of Heaven' (John.3:5)." (Denz. 696)

6. **Question:** Can you quote one Pope who says that God promises to give the actual **Sacrament of Baptism** to one who has been justified by baptism by desire?

Answer: Once again, you **cannot first be justified without** having received the **Sacrament of Baptism**. In other words, we first receive God's Life in our soul through the Sacrament of Baptism. Without the Sacrament of Baptism Original sin cannot be removed, and we cannot initially have remission of our sins or sanctifying grace.

- A. Pope Pius IX, *Unam Sanctam* (1302):**

"Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that *outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins*...In her then is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:5)."

- B. Benedict XIV, Bull *Nuper ad Nos*, Solemn Profession of Faith Prescribed for Maronites, (1743):**

"Likewise, I profess that Baptism is necessary for salvation."
(Denz. 1470)

- C. Pope Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum* (1896):**

"You ask how I prove this? From the very words of the Lord! We can make no exceptions where no distinction is made."

- D. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, On Justification, Chapter: XI, (1547):**

"God does not command impossibilities, but by commanding admonishes you both to do what you can do, to pray for what you cannot do, and (He) assists you that you may be able."

- E. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, On Baptism, Canon 2 (1547):**

"If anyone says that *true* and *natural water* is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,' let him be anathema."

F. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, On Baptism, Canon 5, (1547):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."

G. The Baptismal rite of one of the Gelasian Sacramentary, named after Pope St. Gelasius (492-496):

"Powerful is the mercy of God, mercy able both to lead you, as you seek after the faith of Baptism, to the end of your search, and bring you to us, who hand these mysteries over to you."

H. Pope Leo XIII (*Adiutricem*: On the Rosary, 1895)

"Through you, O Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, the Apostles have preached salvation to the nations; through you the demons have been put to rout and mankind has been summoned back to Heaven; through you every misguided creature held in the thrall of idols is led to recognize the truth; through you have the *faithful been brought to the laver of holy Baptism* and churches been founded among every people."

I. St. Ambrose from "De Mysteriis" Chapter 4:

"One is the baptism which the Church administers, of water and the Holy Ghost, with which catechumens need to be baptized. Nor does the mystery of regeneration exist at all without water. Now, even the catechumen believes; but unless he be baptized, he cannot receive remission of his sins."

7. Do you believe Canon Law is infallible?

Answer: No, Canon Law is not infallible in itself. The infallibility for Canon Law rests on the footnotes and sources given for each Canon. These sources must be looked up and observed if they come from an infallible source, such as a Creed of the Church, a Council, or an Ex Cathedra Statement. I have a letter from you which states that *the sources* for each particular Canon are what are infallible but not the Canon itself.

8. If you believe baptism by desire applies only to justification and not to salvation how do you explain the following Canon which clearly says baptism by desire applies to salvation? Canon 737: "Baptism, the door to and the foundation of the sacraments, necessary for the salvation of all persons in fact or at least in desire, is not validly conferred except through a washing with true, natural water accompanied by the prescribed verbal formula."

Answer: For the third time, we cannot receive God's life in our soul without having first received the Sacrament of Baptism. This is done in order to 1) remove Original sin, 2) receive sanctifying grace, 3) receive the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and 4) mark as a Catholic with an indelible mark. As you said in your previous letter, we must look at the sources for each individual Canon for infallibility.

The infallible sources quoted for Canon 737 are stated from the Council of Trent: Canons 2 and 5 on Baptism state that *water is necessary* for Baptism, and Baptism is not optional but necessary for salvation. Also, Chapters 4 and 7 on Justification state: the Sacrament of Baptism is *the cause* of our initial justification but that it *cannot be effected* without the laver in infants or its desire in adults.

9. Do you believe the Church erred in the above Canon (737)?

Answer: No. The Church speaks through Her infallibility and this is found in the Sources for each Canon, as you wrote in your previous letter. (I have a copy if you would like one.) The *infallible sources* quoted for Canon 737 *do not teach* baptism by desire but simply state that adults cannot be baptized against their will. Even if the water is poured and the form is said, the adult does not receive God's life in his soul unless he wills it.

This is solemnly defined through the Catholic Church teachings: 1. The initial cause of justification in a person's soul is the Sacrament of Baptism, which brings us Supernatural Faith with Hope and Charity for the first time (Chapter 7, Council of Trent). 2. Trent previously states in Chapter 4, that "justification *cannot be effected* without the laver of regeneration (in infants) or a desire for baptism (in adults)."

In other words, if an adult is baptized but he *does not desire to be baptized*, then justification *will not be effected* (will not take place) in his soul. Therefore, you

cannot force baptism on an adult. For infants, however, the *desire* for baptism is not necessary for justification to be effected (to take place) because they do not have the use of reason to desire the Sacrament of Baptism.

A. Pope Innocent III, The Effect of Baptism and the Character:

"But he who never consents, but inwardly contradicts, receives neither the matter nor the sign of the sacrament, because to contradict expressly is more than to not agree..." (Denz. 410-411)

B. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, *Exultate Deo* (1439):

"These sacraments of ours contain grace, and confer it upon those who receive them worthily." (Denz. 695)

C. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, Canon VI on the Sacraments, (1547):

"If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law... do not confer that grace (which they signify) on those who do not place an obstacle in the way...let him be anathema." (Denz. 849)

10. Question: Canon 1239, 2: "Catechumens who through no fault of their own die without Baptism, are to be counted as baptized." This Canon specifically says these catechumens died without baptism. If you believe that all adults who die without baptism go to hell, how can the Church permit them to have ecclesiastical burial?

Answer: It is not a personal belief that all souls who die unbaptized and, therefore, with Original sin go to hell. The Solemn Definitions of the Catholic Church define that souls who die with only Original sin go immediately into hell but to be punished with different degrees. Our judgments can only be based on the standards which the Catholic Church has defined.

A. Pope Gregory X, Council of Lyons II, (1274):

"The souls of those who die in mortal sin or *only with original sin* go down into hell, but there they receive different punishments." (Denz. 464)

B. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"...more over the souls of those who depart in actual mortal sin or *in original sin only*, descend immediately into hell but to undergo punishments of different kinds." (Denz. 693)

There is no source or footnote for Canon 1239 because there is no previous record or teaching of the Catholic Church that permitted such a law. The previous Tradition of the Catholic Church taught otherwise for one thousand and fifty-four years that *no prayers* were permitted to be offered for a Catechumen who had died without Baptism. This also teaches that there are baptized Catechumens because the Church *forbids* us to pray for Catechumens "who have died without the Sacrament of Baptism."

C. The Council of Braga (563 A.D.):

"Neither the commemoration of Sacrifice nor the service of chanting is to be employed for catechumens who have died without baptism."

D. St. Ambrose, De Mysteriis, Chapter 4:

"One is the baptism which the Church administers, of water and the Holy Ghost, with which catechumens need to be baptized. Nor does the mystery of regeneration exist at all without water. Now, even the catechumen believes; but unless he be baptized, he cannot receive remission of his sins."

E. Pope St. Zosimus, Apostolic Letter to the Oriental Churches (418):

"Not one of our children is held not guilty until he is freed through Baptism." (Denz. 109a)

F. Pope St. Leo the Great (Epistle XV:10):

"Since by the transgression of the first man, the whole progeny of the human race is vitiated; no one can be freed from the condition of the old man except by the sacrament of the Baptism of Christ."

G. Pope St. Gregory the Great (Moralia IV, Preface 3):

"Whoever is not loosed by the waters of rebirth remains bound by the first chain of guilt."

H. Pope Leo IV, Council of Valence III (855):

"*All the multitude of the faithful* are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit, and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

11. If you believe baptism of desire applies only to justification and not to salvation how do you explain the following which clearly says baptism of desire applies to salvation? *Rituale Romanum* approved by Pope Pius XI in 1925: "Holy Baptism, is the gateway of the Christian religion and of eternal life, which holds the first place among the other sacraments of the New Law instituted by Christ, is necessary to all in fact or at least in desire for salvation, as the Truth Himself testifies in these words: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3, 5)."

Answer: There is no need to continue to distinguish between justification and salvation because the Church has *solemnly* defined that without the Sacrament of Baptism no one can first receive Supernatural Faith and without Supernatural Faith no one can be justified (Sess. 6, Ch. 7 Council of Trent).

Your Excellency, please:

FIRST, define *your* definition for the terms "cause" (Sess. 6, Ch. 7) and "cannot be effected" (Sess. 6, Ch. 4).

THEN, please answer the following questions:

Q. What is the cause or (what brings about) justification in a person's soul?

A. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, Chapter 7, titled, "Justification and its Causes":

"The instrumental **cause** (of justification) is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the "sacrament of faith," without which no man was ever justified." (Denz. 799)

Q. What happens to an adult who is baptized but does not desire to be baptized? What about an infant?

A. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, Chapter 4, "A Brief Description of Justification of the Sinner":

"This translation (justification) however cannot, since the promulgation of the Gospel, **be effected** except through the laver of regeneration (infants) or its desire (in adults), as it is written: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'" (added parentheses)

- * The Sacrament of Baptism is the **instrument** that is used to **cause** justification in infants and adults.
- * However, in an infant's soul, justification will not take effect (cannot be effected) without the laver of regeneration.
- * Further, in an adult's soul, justification will not take effect (cannot be effected) without his desire for baptism.

Meaning, if an adult is baptized but does not desire to be baptized, then justification will not take place in his soul; therefore, he is not justified.

The desire for baptism in an adult's soul is necessary to bring the cause (Baptism) into effect.

EXAMPLES:

Q. What causes a cordless drill to run?

A. Electric Energy produced from the energy of the battery and coils.

Q. How will this be effected?

A. By pulling the button on the drill.

Obviously, the pulling of a button on a drill is not the cause for the drill to produce power. To know this, simply grab a cordless drill and pull the button without the battery attached. The drill will not produce power and nothing will happen. Pulling the button is not the cause of giving the drill power; pulling the button simply brings the cause into effect.

Lastly, attach the battery and pull the button.

The cause (the battery producing power through the coils) is effected (takes place) by the pulling of the button.

OR

Q. What causes a car to run?

A. Energy, which is known as combustion. Combustion causes a car to be put into motion.

Q. What happens if one does not turn the key to turn the car on or push the gas pedal?

A. The cause (combustion) will not be effected (will not take effect). The car will not move into motion.

The turning of a key or pushing of a pedal does not cause a car to run; it simply brings the cause into effect. To know this simply push the gas pedal in the car when the car is not on and see that nothing will happen.

The same is true for the Sacrament of Baptism. The Sacrament of Baptism is the instrumental cause of justification. But if an adult does not desire baptism, then justification will not take place (be effected) in his soul.

* Nowhere does the Council of Trent state that the *desire for baptism* is the cause for our justification.

Q. What is the cause of first bringing justification into an adult's soul?

A. The Sacrament of Baptism.

Q. What happens to an adult who is baptized but does not desire baptism?

A. Justification will not be effected in the adult's soul.

Obviously, the desire for baptism is not the cause of justification in an adult's soul. The cause of justification is the Sacrament of Baptism. This cause (baptism) will not be brought into effect (be effected) without his desire for baptism.

Q. What about infants?

Q. What is the cause of initially bringing justification into their soul?

A. The Sacrament of Baptism.

An infant cannot have a desire for baptism. Therefore, an infant's justification cannot be effected without the laver of regeneration alone.

The Council of Trent defined that the cause for justification in all people is the Sacrament of Baptism, but that justification cannot be brought into effect (cannot be effected) without the laver of regeneration (infants) or its desire (in adults).

Simply read Trent again, especially Chapters 4 through 7 which speak for themselves.

Besides the teachings on justification, the Church has defined that there is **one universal church of the faithful**, and there is no salvation outside of it. She has also defined that through **baptism with water** all the multitude of the faithful are incorporated into the Church. This eliminates those people being invisibly "attached" to the soul of the Church through baptism by desire.

A. Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council (1215):

"One indeed is the universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved."

B. Pope Leo IV, Council of Valence III (855):

"All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit, and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

C. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence; Decree for the Armenians (1439):

"Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments because it is the gateway to the spiritual life. By it we are made members of Christ and His Body, the Church. And since death entered the universe through the first man, "unless we are reborn of water and the Spirit, we cannot," as the Truth says, 'enter the kingdom of Heaven' (John.3:5)." (Denz. 696)

D. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

"Besides, only one Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is "one God and one faith" (Eph. 4:5), which is celebrated in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Denz. 482)

12. Do you believe Pius XI erred in approving this Rituale?

Answer: Yes, *someone* erred when they inserted "or at least its desire" in such a way because this contradicts previous Solemn Teachings of the Catholic Church (see definitions for #11 above). The previous ritual used throughout the centuries of the Church did not have "or at least its desire" inserted.

13. The Catechism of the Council of Trent says: "On adults, however, the Church has not been accustomed to confer the Sacrament of Baptism at once, but has ordained that it be deferred for a certain time. The delay is not attended with the same danger as in the case of infants, which we have already mentioned; should any unforeseen accident make it impossible for adults to be washed in the salutary waters, their

intention and determination to receive Baptism and their repentance for past sins, will avail them to grace and righteousness.” (TAN Books)

Since this catechism was written by those who lived at the time of the Council and by order of the Pope, they would have known the true meaning of the Canons on Baptism from the Council of Trent. Do you believe the writers of this catechism are wrong and you are right? If not, why do you not accept their teaching?

Answer: No, I do not believe the writers of the Catechism of the Council of Trent are wrong. The next line in the catechism (which has been omitted in your question) states how the delay for baptism in adults is advantageous because *it further proves who actually has the proper dispositions and sincere desire to be baptized, from those who do not.* The last sentence in the same chapter (also omitted in your question) states, “Finally, when *Baptism is administered* to adults with solemn ceremonies on the appointed days of Easter and Pentecost only greater religious reverence is shown to the Sacrament.”

God brings the Sacrament of Baptism to those who truly desire it. A sudden accident or event may hinder someone for a certain time to be baptized, or God may take his life through death; but again, this only proves who truly has the proper dispositions and who does not. If someone has a *true desire* to be baptized (a true desire only God knows), then God will bring him the Sacrament of Baptism to mark him as a Catholic and to incorporate him into the Church.

How do we know that God will bring all people the Sacrament of Baptism? Because, *this is an infallible truth of the Catholic Faith and God has promised us through His teachings and example.* God is not a deceiver and is not a liar. God is eternally faithful to His Words and promises.

A. Jesus Christ was baptized by St. John: (Matthew Ch. 3, 16-17)

“And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to him: and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him. And behold a voice from heaven, saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

B. Jesus Christ said as a Divine Promise: (John 3, 5)

“Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

The One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church has infallibly defined:

C. Pope Leo IV, Council of Valence III (855):

“All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit (John 3: 5), and through this are truly incorporated into the Church.” (Denz. 324)

The catechism was written to defend what the Council had previously solemnly defined. I do not accept “your interpretation” claiming baptism by desire because it contradicts the Solemn Definitions of the Council of Trent (1547 – Pope Paul III), Council of Florence (1439 – Pope Eugene IV), Council of Valence (855 – Pope Leo IV), Council of Vienne (1312 – Pope Clement V), Council of Chalcedon (451 – Pope Leo the Great), the Nicene Creed (325 – Pope St Sylvester), the Bull of Pope Boniface (1302), and many other teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Catechism teaches what the Council solemnly defined.

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,

On Baptism, Canon 2 (1547):

"If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,' (10), let him be anathema." (Footnote 10 - John 3, 5)

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,

On Baptism, Canon 5, (1547):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."

Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,

On Justification, Chapter 7 (1547):

"Hence man through Jesus Christ, into Whom he is ingrafted (at Baptism), receives in the said justification together with the remission of sins, the gifts of **faith, hope and charity**, all infused at the same time. For **faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto**, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, **nor makes him a living member of His body**. (Denz. 800)

Catechism of the Council of**Trent:**

"Thus, it follows that Baptism may be rightly and accurately defined: The Sacrament of regeneration by water in the word." (pg. 163)

"The law of Baptism, as established by our Lord, extends to all, so that unless they are regenerated to God through the grace of baptism, be their parents Christian or infidels, they are born to eternal misery and destruction..." (pgs. 176-177)

"The universal and absolute necessity of Baptism, these words of the Redeemer unequivocally declare, 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3, 5)'" (pg. 154)

Catechism of the Council of**Trent**

"In the first place we who by Baptism are united to, and become members of Christ's body, should not be more honored than our head." (pg. 186)

"This grace is accompanied by a most splendid train of all virtues, which are divinely infused into the soul along with grace. . . .By Baptism we are also united to Christ, as members to their Head." (pg. 188)

**Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,
On Justification, Chapter 5:**

**“The Necessity of Preparation
for Justification in Adults, and
Whence It Proceeds”**

“It is furthermore declared that in adults the beginning of that justification must proceed from a predisposing grace of God. . . (that they) may be disposed through His quickening and helping grace to convert themselves to their own justification by freely assenting to and cooperating with that grace...”

**Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,
On Justification, Chapter 6:**

“The Manner of Preparation”

“Now, they (the adults) are disposed to justice when aroused and aided by divine grace, receiving grace by hearing... they believing to be true what has been divinely revealed and promised... understand themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice...consider the mercy of God, are raised to hope...they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice and on that account are moved against sin...that is, by that repentance that must be performed before baptism; finally, when they resolve to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God.”

**Catechism of the Council of
Trent**

“Dispositions for Baptism”

“The faithful are also to be instructed in the necessary dispositions for Baptism. In the first place they must desire and intend to receive it...it is fit that it be administered to those only who receive it of their own free will and accord; it is to be forced upon none.” (pg. 180)

“Besides a wish to be baptized, in order to obtain the grace of the sacrament, faith is also necessary. Our Lord and Savior has said, “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.” (pg. 181)

“Another necessary condition is repentance for past sins, and a fixed determination to avoid all sin in the future. Should anyone desire baptism and be unwilling to correct the habit of sinning, he should be altogether rejected. For nothing is so opposed to the grace and power of Baptism as the intention and purpose of those who resolve to never abandon sin.” (pg. 181)

**Pope Paul III, Council of Trent,
On Justification, Chapter 7:
“Justification and Its Causes”**

“This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself which is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man...that he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting. The causes of this justification are...the instrumental cause is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which no man was ever justified...”

**Catechism of the Council of
Trent**

“Our souls are replenished with divine grace, by which we are rendered just and children of God and are made heirs to eternal salvation. For it is written: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and the Apostle testifies that the Church is cleansed by the laver of water in the word of life.” (pg. 188)

14. Do you accept the following teaching of Pius IX which nowhere mentions actual baptism in saying these persons can be saved? How does this fit with your denial of salvation through baptism by desire? “We all know that those who are afflicted with invincible ignorance in regard to our holy religion, if they carefully keep the precepts of the natural law that have been written by God in the hearts of all men, if they are prepared to obey God, and if they lead a virtuous and dutiful life, can attain eternal life by the power of divine light and grace. For God, who reads comprehensively in every detail the minds and souls, the thoughts and habits of all men, will not permit, in accordance with his infinite goodness and mercy, anyone who is not guilty of a voluntary fault to suffer eternal punishment.”

Answer: Yes, I accept the following letter from Pope Pius IX. I do not accept your interpretation of the letter “claiming baptism by desire” over the Solemn Definitions of the Catholic Church. You claim that God will save people without the Sacraments (condemned by the Council of Trent) and more specifically without the Sacrament of Baptism to make one a member of the Catholic Church (condemned by the Councils of: Valence, Vienne, Florence, and Trent). This is obstinately opposing the authority and Definitions of the Church. It is stubbornly separating your teachings from the unity of the Church and from the valid successors of Peter.

“Their inculpable (invincible) ignorance will not save them; but if they fear God and live up to their conscience, God, in His infinite mercy, will furnish them with the necessary means of salvation, even so to send, if needed, an angel to instruct them in the Catholic Faith, rather than let them perish through inculpable ignorance.” (St. Thomas Aquinas)

“Not even the ones who are able to say that they did not hear the Gospel of Christ will free themselves from condemnation, since faith depends on hearing.” (St. Augustine)

Baptism and Faith are a necessary means for salvation:

A. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, (1441):

“It firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot

become participants in eternal life, but will depart "into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25: 41), unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock..." (Denz. 714)

B. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence; Decree for the Armenians (1439):

"Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments because it is the gateway to the spiritual life. By it we are made members of Christ and His Body, the Church. And since death entered the universe through the first man, "unless we are reborn of water and the Spirit, we cannot," as the Truth says, 'enter the kingdom of Heaven' (John.3:5)." (Denz. 696)

C. The Athanasian Creed:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic faith is this: That we worship *one God in Trinity*, and Trinity in Unity . . . Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the *Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ* . . . Who *suffered for our salvation* . . . And they that have done good shall go into *life everlasting*; and they that have done evil, into *everlasting fire*. This is the Catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved."

D. Pope Gregory X, Council of Lyons II, (1274):

"The souls of those who die in mortal sin or only with original sin go down into hell, but there they receive different punishments." (Denz. 464)

E. Pope St. Zosimus, Apostolic Letter to the Oriental Churches (418):

"Not one of our children is held not guilty until he is freed through Baptism." (Denz. 109a)

F. Pope St. Leo the Great (Epistle XV:10):

“Since by the transgression of the first man, the whole progeny of the human race is vitiated; no one can be freed from the condition of the old man except by the sacrament of the Baptism of Christ.”

G. Pope St. Gregory the Great (*Moralia* IV, Preface 3):

“Whoever is not loosed by the waters of rebirth remains bound by the first chain of guilt.”

H. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

“Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is “one God and one faith” (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” (Denz. 482)

God in His infinite mercy and power of Divine light and grace will not permit someone to die without bringing him into the Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Baptism. Pope Pius IX wrote in *Singulari Quadam*, December 9, 1854, a similar encyclical and he concluded with these words:

“As long as we are on earth, weighed down by this mortal mass which blunts the soul, let us hold most firmly that, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, there is ‘one God, one faith, one baptism’ (Eph. 4: 5); to seek further is not permitted.”

15. St. Thomas’ theology has been held in high regard by the Pope for centuries and Leo XIII ordered it to be used in seminaries. If he erred against a dogma of the Church as you say, how do you explain that not one pope pointed this out or ordered this error expunged?

Answer:

A. Pope Pius XII declared in an Allocution:

“The Church has never accepted even the most holy and most eminent Doctors, and does not now accept even a single one of them, as the principal source of truth. The Church certainly considers Thomas and Augustine great

Doctors, and she accords them the highest praise; but, by divine mandate, the interpreter and guardian of the Sacred Scriptures and depository of Sacred Tradition living within her, the Church alone is the entrance to salvation; she alone, by herself, and under the protection and guidance of the Holy Ghost, is the source of truth."

(Gregorian University, Oct. 17, 1953; PTC 1351)

B. Errors of the Jansenists, 1690 A.D., Condemned Proposition #30:

"When anyone finds a doctrine clearly established in Augustine, he can absolutely hold and teach it, disregarding any bull of the pope." (This is condemned)

Therefore, neither St. Thomas, nor any non-papal Doctor or Father of the Church, on his own, represents the binding teaching authority of Christ and His Church. If you would like to hold a speculation from St. Thomas over the Solemn Definitions of the Catholic Church, then that is your erroneous decision. The Church has declared that we need the Sacrament of Baptism to enter heaven and Baptism includes *water*. To hold St. Thomas above the infallible definitions of the Church, we would also deny the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady (*Summa Theologia*, III, Q.27, Art.2, ad.4). The Supreme Magisterium of the Church defined as a Dogma the "Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary," 1854, Pope Pius IX. This supersedes St. Thomas's speculation that Our Lady was conceived with original sin; just as the Supreme Magisterium overruled St. Thomas's speculation on baptism by desire.

Queen Isabella told her confessor as he attempted to answer a question she had presented to him, "Father, I do not want to know what the Fathers said, good as they were. I want to know what the Church says."

The Church teaches there is one Baptism, and this one baptism includes water, and through this one baptism all the multitude of the faithful are incorporated into the Church.

C. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 2):

"If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Unless a

man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 3:5): let him be anathema." (Denz. 858)

* Please note, the Canon above does NOT state that water is necessary for the "sacrament of baptism", but states that water is necessary for "baptism".

You falsely claim and teach that the word **baptism** includes **three forms**: the sacrament of baptism (with water), baptism by desire (no water), and baptism by blood (no water).

However, the Church has stated (Canon above): "If anyone says water is not necessary for baptism...let you be anathema."

A simple question for you:

How can you teach that baptism has three forms (two of which do not include water), when the Church has defined that water is necessary for baptism?

There is only one answer to such simple a question:

You cannot teach or believe baptism has three forms because the Church **condemns** any form of baptism **without** water. This excludes baptisms by desire, by blood, using milk, alcohol, coffee, juice, etc.

D. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 5):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema." (Denz. 861)

E. Pope Leo IV (847-55), Council of Valence III (855):

"*All the multitude of the faithful* are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit (John 3, 5), and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

F. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

"Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is "one God and one faith" (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Denz. 482)

- 16. Pope Gregory XVI, said in the Bull of Canonization for St. Alphonsus:**
“What deserves to be particularly noticed is, that after a careful examination of his works, it has been ascertained that they all, notwithstanding their number or extent, may be perused by the faithful with the most perfect safety.” Do you believe this Pope erred in stating this? Why would he say this if St. Alphonsus taught a doctrine condemned by Trent as you say?

Answer: No, I do not believe the Pope erred in stating this. Because we can peruse the writings of St. Alphonsus with “perfect safety” does not mean we can use his writings over the Definitions of the Catholic Church. It is the same with St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine in your above question. Fallible men, as holy and good as they were, do not come before the infallibility of the Church (Creeds, Councils, and Ex Cathedra statements).

Venerable Mary Agreda (1602-1665), “Mystical City of God” ‘the Conception’):

“Very often I permit and cause differences of opinion among the doctors and teachers. Thus, some of them maintain what is true, and others, according to their natural disposition, defend what is doubtful. Others still again are permitted to say even what is not true, though not in open contradiction to the veiled truths of faith which all must hold. Some also teach what is possible according to their supposition. By this varied light, truth is traced, and the mysteries of faith become more manifest. Doubt serves as a stimulus to the understanding for the investigation of truth. Therefore, controversies of teachers fulfill a proper and holy end. They are also permitted in order to make known that real knowledge dwells in My Church more than in the combined study of all the holy and perfect teachers.”

Here are a few statements made by certain Saints denying baptism by desire; the Catholic Church has stated that we can use their writings with perfect safety as well:

A. St. Gregory Nanzianzen, Oration of the Holy Lights:

“Of those who fail to be baptized, some are utterly animal or bestial; others honor Baptism but they delay; some out of carelessness, some because of insatiable

passion. Still others are not able to receive Baptism because of infancy or some voluntary circumstance which prevents their receiving the gift, even if they desire it. I think the first group will have to suffer punishment, not only for their other sins, but also for their contempt of Baptism. The second group will also be punished, but less, because it was not through wickedness so much as foolishness that brought their failure. The third group will be neither glorified, nor punished; for, although unsealed, they are not wicked. If you were able to judge a man who intends to commit murder solely by his intention and without any act of murder, then you could likewise reckon as baptized one who desired Baptism, without having received Baptism. But, since you cannot do the former, how can you do the latter? Put it this way: if desire has equal power with actual Baptism, you would then be satisfied to desire Glory, as though that longing itself were Glory! Do you suffer by not attaining the actual Glory, so long as you have a desire for it? I cannot see it!"

The Roman Breviary, May 9th concerning St. Gregory Nazianzen:

"In the opinion of learned and holy men, there is nothing to be found in his writings which is not conformable to true piety and Catholic faith, or which anyone could reasonably call in question."

B. St. Ambrose, De Mysteriis, Chapter 4:

"One is the baptism which the Church administers, of water and the Holy Ghost, with which catechumens need to be baptized. Nor does the mystery of regeneration exist at all without water. Now, even the catechumen believes; but unless he be baptized, he cannot receive remission of his sins."

"No one ascends into the kingdom of Heaven except by the Sacrament of Baptism. No one is excused from Baptism: not infants, nor anyone hindered by any necessity. When the Lord

Jesus came to John and John said, 'I ought to be baptized by Thee, and dost Thou come to me?' Jesus said: 'Permit it to be so for now. For this it becometh us to fulfill all justice' (Matt. 3, 14-15). Behold how all justice rests on Baptism."

"The Church was redeemed at the price of Christ's blood... For no one ascends into the kingdom of heaven except through the Sacrament of Baptism... 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"

"You have read, therefore, that the three witnesses in baptism are one: water, blood, and the Spirit (1 John 5:8): And if you withdraw any one of these, the Sacrament of Baptism is not valid. For what is the water without the cross of Christ? A common element with no sacramental effect. Nor on the other hand is there any mystery of regeneration without water, for 'unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"

"The Lord was baptized, not to be cleansed himself but to cleanse the waters, so that the waters, cleansed by the flesh of Christ which knew no sin, might have the power of baptism. Whoever comes, therefore, to the washing of Christ lays aside his sins."

C. St. Augustine, On John XIII, tract VII:

"How many sincere catechumens die unbaptized, and are thus lost forever. When we come into the sight of God, no one will say, 'Why was this man led by God's direction to be baptized, while that man, although he lived properly as a catechumen, was killed in a sudden disaster and not baptized? Look for rewards, and you will find nothing but punishment. Of what use would repentance be, if Baptism did not follow? No matter what progress a catechumen may make, he still carries the burden of iniquity, and it is not taken away until he has been baptized."

17. Can you quote one Pope or Council which says: "If anyone says you can get to heaven by baptism of desire without the actual reception of the sacrament, let him be anathema."?"

Answer: I am very surprised you asked this question knowing the Church never specifically condemns all false teachings by name. For example, can you show me one Pope or Council that says:

"If anyone says that the Novus Ordo, Vatican II Church is a false religion, let him be anathema."

"If anyone says Hinduism or Buddhism or Satanism or 7th Day Adventism or Mormonism or Atheism, etc. is a true religion, let him be anathema."

You will not find these specifically condemned by name, but you will find:

"I am the Lord Thy God, and thou shalt not have strange gods before Me."

This Divine Command excludes all other religions. The Church does not need to name all false religions because the list would be endless. There are new religions being founded every day. How could the Church condemn by name the abundance of false religions daily coming into existence?

The Church condemns all false religions by unequivocally stating: "The Catholic Church is the one true Church and there is no salvation outside of it".

This beautiful and powerful teaching of the Catholic Church condemns all other false religions that may come into existence till the end of time.

A simple example:

When a father and mother of a family are leaving the home for a short period of time, they do not have to tell their children, "Do not play in the street, do not go to the neighbors, do not climb the fence, do not drive the tractor, do not go to the store, do not ride your bike, do not play in the mud, do not play on the grass, do not throw rocks at the power line, do not play with the sprinkler, do not hit the garage, do not break the window, do not climb the tree, do not pick the apples, etc. etc."

If a father and mother had to list everything by name which the children are not supposed to do, then the list would be never-ending. Instead, the father and mother simply say, "Do not leave the house while we are gone." This one command EXCLUDES all other possibilities outside the house.

There is no other way the Catholic Church can teach then command what we must do to be saved.

The Church's Solemn Magisterium has defined that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. This condemns all other religions. She does not need to condemn each false religion by name when She has defined:

A. Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council (1215):

"One indeed is the *universal Church of the faithful*, outside of which no one at all is saved."

B. Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, (1441):

"It firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart "into everlasting fire which was prepare for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25: 41), unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fastings, almsgivings, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed his blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church." (Denz. 714)

C. Pope Boniface, Unam Sanctam (1302):

"Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins...In her then is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:5)."

The same is true for the Sacraments and especially the Sacrament of Baptism. God has commanded, "Unless we are born again of water and the Holy Ghost we cannot enter Heaven," (John 3:5) This positively excludes any other possibility for baptism.

Again, I cannot show you where a Pope or Council has positively condemned by name "baptism by desire", but this is not necessary because the Church has defined that we need the Sacraments to enter Heaven, that water is necessary for Baptism, and that Baptism is necessary for salvation. These definitions positively condemn any other notion of being saved without the (necessary) Sacraments, without Baptism, and without water for Baptism.

D. Pope Paul IV, Council of Trent, Profession of Faith (1565):

"...I also acknowledge that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the New Law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and that they are necessary for the salvation of the human race, although it is not necessary for each individual to receive them all..."

E. Pope Leo IV (847-55), Council of Valence III (855):

"All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5), and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

F. Pope St. Leo the Great, Council of Chalcedon I (451):

"There are three that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one" (*I John 5:8*). This means the Spirit of sanctification, and the blood of redemption, and the water of Baptism, which **three things are one and remain undivided, and not one of them is separated from union with the others.**"

G. Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

"Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is "one God and one faith" (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Denz. 482)

H. Pope Innocent III, *Non ut Apponeres* (1206):

"In Baptism, two things are always and necessarily required, namely: the words and the element (water)... You ought not to doubt that they do not have true Baptism in which one of them is missing." (Denz. 412)

I. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 2):

"If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit' (Jn. 3:5): let him be anathema." (Denz. 858)

J. Pope Paul III, Council of Trent (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 5):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema." (Denz. 861)

K. Pope St. Innocent I (401-17) declared:

"That the rewards of eternal life are given without Baptism is very foolish." (Epistle 29).

L. Benedict XIV, Bull *Nuper ad Nos*, Solemn Profession of Faith Prescribed for Maronites, (1743):

"Likewise, I profess that Baptism is necessary for salvation." (Denz. 1470)

M. Pope Pius IX, *Singulari Quadam*, (1854):

"As long as we are on earth, weighed down by this mortal mass which blunts the soul, let us hold most firmly that, in accordance with Catholic doctrine, there is 'one God, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4: 5); to seek further is not permitted."

- 18. Do you believe that theologians after the Council of Trent's decrees on Baptism (including Doctors of the Church and many saints) have all misunderstood what the Council meant? How could they all be**

wrong? How many theologians can you quote after Trent who claim that the Council did not teach baptism of desire as a means of salvation?

Answer: First, they are not all wrong. On the following pages is an example by St. Peter Canisius, a Doctor of the Church. He wrote immediately after the Council of Trent and did not teach baptism by desire.

Second, you must take your question to God and ask Him, "How can they all be wrong?" I do not have an answer for why "a majority of people" have been wrong. I do know, however, that throughout the Old and New Testament God does not take into consideration the number of people or the "majority" of people when teaching what is right or wrong. Simply read the Old Testament and see how the majority were consistently wrong: a) all in Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, b) only two out of all the Jews were permitted to see the Promised Land, and 3) only eight souls were preserved in the Flood out of the entire world! St. Jerome said, "One in every hundred Priests is saved." In the year 1153 A.D. 55,000 souls were judged in one day: St. Bernard and a Deacon went straight to heaven, three went to Purgatory, and the rest were damned. And this was in a time when Catholicism was flourishing throughout the world! Further, another chronicle by a woman who died in Germany states that 66,000 souls were judged and of those 66,000 only three were saved. Is this not a great mystery of the Catholic Church---why a majority of people are wrong and damned? Can we reject a mystery of the Catholic Church because it is hard and difficult to understand?

Ask Jesus Christ Himself why the majority did not follow Him when He was on this earth. Ask Him what He meant when He stated:

"Many are called, but few are chosen."

"Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it!"

I pray that you will look objectively at what the Church has solemnly defined and not be influenced by what the "majority of people" believe or do. The Church is not a democracy and is not based on the rules of the majority.

Question: How many theologians can you quote after Trent who claim that the Council did not teach baptism of desire as a means of salvation?

Answer: St. Peter Canisius Doctor of the Church wrote immediately after the Council of Trent. His catechism was used all throughout Germany. In fact, the bishops of Germany refused at Vatican Council I in 1870 to adopt any other Catechism. St. Peter Canisius makes no mention of “three baptisms” and quotes the Council of Trent to prove that Baptism *with water* is necessary for all people and that justification **cannot be effected** without the laver (in infants) or its desire (in adults). St. Ambrose is also referenced and states that a Catechumen, no matter how much he believes, cannot have remission of his sins without first receiving the Sacrament of Baptism.

"Summa Doctrinae Christianae, cum Appendice de Hominis Lapsu et Justificatione Secundum Sententiam et Doctrinam Concilii Tridentini, ex Doctoris Petri Canisii." (Pg. 80)

De baptismi Sacramento.

Quid est baptismus, et an cunctis necessarius?

I.

"*) Est hoc novae legis primum et maxime necessarium Sacramentum, in ablutione corporis exteriore, et legitima verborum enuntiatione, juxta CHRISTI institutionem, consistens. Necessarium inquam sacramentum non solum a) adultis, sed etiam b) parvulis, ac simul eis efficax ad salutem aeternam consequendam."

*) Act. 2, Marc. 16, 16. Joann. 3, 22; 4, 2. Tit. 3, 5. Matth. 28, 19. Ephes. 5, 25. 26. 1. Petr. 3, 20. 21. a) Trid. Sess. 6. C. 4. et sess. 7. Can. 5. De baptism. Aug. tract. 13. In Joann. Ambr. de myst. Init. C. 4. Cl. ep. 4. Ad Julium.

"Summary of Christian Doctrine, with an Appendix of the Fall of Man and Justification According to the Teaching and Doctrine of the Council of Trent, from the Doctor Peter Canisius." (pg. 80)

Concerning the Sacrament of Baptism.

What is baptism, and is it necessary?

I.

"*) Baptism is the first and most necessary Sacrament of the new law, it consists in the external washing of the body, and the announcing of the legitimate words, as Christ has instituted it. The sacrament is not only necessary for a) adults, but also b) for infants, to bring them to eternal salvation.

Footnotes:

*) Acts of the Apostles 2: 58

-St. Mark 16: 16: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, he who does not believe shall be damned."

-John 3, 22: "After these things Jesus and his disciples came into the land of Judea: and there he abode with them, and baptized."

-John 4: 2: "Though Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples"

-Titus 3, 5: "Not by the works of justice, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost"

-Matthew 28: 19: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

-Ephesians 5: 25-26: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and delivered himself up for it: That he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life"

-1 Peter 3, 20-21: "Which had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe, when the ark was a building: wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. Whereunto baptism being of the like form, now saveth you also: not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the examination of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

a) -Council of Trent, Session 6, Chapter 4: "This translation (justification) however cannot, since the promulgation of the Gospel, be effected except through the laver of regeneration or its desire, as it is written: Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

-Council of Trent, Canon 5, On Baptism: "If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."

-Augustine Tract. 13, Concerning John.

-Ambrose. De Mysteriis, Chapter 4: "One is the baptism which the Church administers, of water and the Holy Ghost, with which catechumens need to be baptized. Nor does the mystery of regeneration exist at all without water. Now, even the catechumen believes; but unless he be baptized, he cannot receive remission of his sins."

-Pope Clement, letter 4 to Julius

In addition to asking me questions, please ask yourself:

Do you deny a Catholic Dogma because you are influenced by the “number of people?” Do you think the Catholic Church is a Democratic Society made up of fallible bishops and theologians, or is the Church a Monarchial Society founded by Christ upon the infallibility of Peter, as its Head and Supreme Ruler?

The Church is not a Democracy. The Church is a Monarchial Society.

The Catholic Church follows a similar structure as our U.S. Judicial Court System. When a case is worked through our judicial court system, county courts, state courts, and federal courts can make rulings and decisions. However, when the Supreme Court makes a ruling, all previous lower court rulings are meaningless if they in any way contradict the Supreme Court's decision. A hundred lower court rulings cannot overrule the Supreme Court.

Likewise, the Church has made the ruling through Her Supreme Solemn Magisterium that there is “One indeed Universal Church of the faithful, outside of which there is no salvation.” Further, the Church has defined, “All the multitude of the faithful are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit, and through this are truly incorporated into the Church.” This is the Supreme Solemn Magisterium's (Supreme Court's) final ruling for the Catholic Church. Any other lower authority: bishops, theologians, saints, etc. can never overturn the Supreme Magisterium of the Church. The Church is *not* a democracy.

The Definitions of the Catholic Church read for themselves. They are to be understood as they were once defined (and have been previously stated). Please take the time to read them. I pray you will see how simple the Catholic Faith is and how subtle and incremental Satan is in deceiving a majority as you are doing today.

1.) Pope Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* (1832):

"Nothing which has been defined is to be withdrawn, or changed, or added to, but must be kept unadulterated as to content and expression."

2.) Pope Pius IX, *Vatican Council I*, (1870):

"The doctrine of the faith which God has revealed has not been proposed to human intelligences to be perfected by them as if it were a philosophical system, but as a divine deposit entrusted to the Spouse of Christ to be faithfully guarded and infallibly interpreted. Hence the sense, too, of the sacred dogmas is that which our *Holy Mother the Church has once declared*, nor is this sense ever to be abandoned on plea or pretext of a more profound comprehension of the truth."

3.) Pope Leo IV (847-55), *Council of Valence III* (855):

"*All the multitude of the faithful* are regenerated from water and the Holy Spirit, and through this are truly incorporated into the Church." (Denz. 324)

4.) Pope Eugene IV, *Council of Florence; Decree for the Armenians* (1439):

"Holy Baptism holds the first place among all the sacraments because it is the gateway to the spiritual life. By it we are made members of Christ and His Body, the Church. And since death entered the universe through the first man, "unless we are reborn of water and the Spirit, we cannot," as the Truth says, 'enter the kingdom of Heaven' (John.3:5)." (Denz. 696)

5.) Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent* (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 2):

"If anyone says that true and natural water is not necessary for baptism and thus twists into some metaphor the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit" (Jn. 3:5); let him be anathema." (Denz. 858)

6.) Pope Paul III, *Council of Trent* (1547), Canons on Baptism (Canon 5):

"If anyone says that baptism is optional, that is, not necessary for salvation, let him be anathema."
(Denz. 861)

7.) Pope Julius III, Council of Trent (1551), Session on Penance, Chapter 4:

"The Church exercises judgment on no one who has not first entered it through the gateway of baptism. For, what have I, saith the Apostle, to do to judge them that are without? It is otherwise with those who are of the household of the faith, whom Christ our Lord has once, by the laver of baptism, made the members of His own body."
(Denz. 895)

8.) Pope St. Leo the Great, Council of Chalcedon I (451):

"There are three that bear witness: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three are one" (*I John 5:8*). This means the Spirit of sanctification, and the blood of redemption, and the water of Baptism, which **three things are one and remain undivided, and not one of them is separated from union with the others.**"

9.) Pope Clement V, Council of Vienne (1311-12):

"Besides, *only one* Baptism which regenerates all who are baptized in Christ must be faithfully confessed by all, just as there is "one God and one faith" (Eph. 4:5), *which is celebrated in water* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."
(Denz. 482)

10.) Pope Gregory X, Council of Lyons II, (1274):

"The souls of those who die in mortal sin or only with original sin go down into hell, but there they receive different punishments."
(Denz. 464)

11.) The Athanasian Creed:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic faith is this: That we worship *one God in Trinity*, and

Trinity in Unity . . . Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation; that he also believe faithfully the *Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ* . . . Who *suffered for our salvation* . . . And they that have done good shall go into *life everlasting*; and they that have done evil, into *everlasting fire*. This is the Catholic faith; which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved."

12.) Pope Innocent III, Lateran Council (1215):

"One indeed is the universal Church of the faithful, outside of which no one at all is saved."

13.) Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, (1441):

"It firmly believes, professes, and proclaims that those not living within the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics cannot become participants in eternal life, but will depart "into everlasting fire which was prepare for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25: 41), unless before the end of life the same have been added to the flock; and that the unity of the ecclesiastical body is so strong that only to those remaining in it are the sacraments of the Church of benefit for salvation, and do fasts, almsgivings, and other functions of piety and exercises of Christian service produce eternal reward, and that no one, whatever almsgiving he has practiced, even if he has shed his blood for the name of Christ, can be saved, unless he has remained in the bosom and unity of the Catholic Church." (Denz. 714)

14.) Pope Pius IX, Unam Sanctam (1302):

"Urged by faith, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is one, holy, catholic, and also apostolic. We believe in her firmly and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither salvation nor the remission of sins... 'In her then is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism' (Eph. 4:5)."

15.) Pope Paul IV, Council of Trent, Profession of Faith (1565):

"...I also acknowledge that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the New Law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and that they are necessary for the salvation of the human race, although it is not necessary for each individual to receive them all..."

16.) Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, Chapter 7, titled, Justification and its Causes:

"The instrumental cause (of justification) is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the "sacrament of faith," without which no man was ever justified."
(Denz. 799)

17.) Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"The effect of this sacrament is the remission of every sin, original and actual, also of every punishment which is due to the sin itself. For this reason, no satisfaction is to be enjoined on the baptized for their past sins."
(Denz. 696)

18.) Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, *Decree on Original Sin* (1546):

"If anyone denies that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in Baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away, but is only brushed over and or not imputed: let him be anathema."
(Denz. 792)

19.) Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"For through Baptism we are spiritually reborn."
(Denz. 695)

20.) Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, *Cantata Domino* (1441):

"The Sacrament of Baptism... through which we are snatched from the domination of the Devil and adopted among the sons of God."
(Denz. 712)

21.) **Pope Paul III, Council of Trent, *Decree on Original Sin* (1546), Ch. 5:**

“God hates nothing in the regenerated because there is no condemnation for those truly buried with Christ by means of Baptism into death (Rom.6:4), but putting off the old man and putting on the new man which was created according to God (Eph.4:22 ff; Col.3:9 f), are made innocent, without stain, pure, guiltless and beloved sons of God...” (Denz.792)

22.) **Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence, *Decree for the Greeks* (1439):**

“It is likewise defined that the souls of those, who after the reception of Baptism have incurred no stain of sin at all, when released from the same bodies are immediately received into heaven, and see clearly the one and Triune God Himself as He is...” (Denz. 693)

23.) **Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mystici Corporis* (1943):**

“Christ indicated Baptism as the means whereby future believers were to be grafted on the Body of the Church... Finally, on the tree of the Cross He won for Himself His Church, that is, all the members of His Mystical Body, who are incorporated in this Mystical Body by the waters of Baptism through the saving virtue of this Cross.” (PTC. 1027, 1030)

24.) **Pope St. Innocent I (401-17) declared:**

“That the rewards of eternal life are given without Baptism is very foolish.” (Epistle 29)

25.) **Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mystici Corporis* (1943):**

“Through the waters of Baptism those who are born into this world dead in sin are not only born again and made members of the Church, but being sealed with a spiritual character they become able and fit to receive the other sacraments.”

26.) **Pope Pius XII, *Encyclical Mystici Corporis* (1943):**

“Only those are to be considered real members of the Church who have been regenerated in the waters of

Baptism, and profess the true Faith... Consequently, as in the real assembly of the faithful there can be only one Body, one Lord, and one Baptism.” (Denz. 2286)

27.) Pope Pius XII, Encyclical *Mediator Dei* (1947):

“Baptism is the distinctive mark of *all* Christians, and serves to differentiate them from those who have not been cleansed in this purifying stream and *consequently are not members of Christ.*”

28.) Pope Pius XI, *Quas Primas* (December 11, 1925):

“The Catholic Church, is the kingdom of Christ on earth.... The gospels present this kingdom as one which men prepare to enter by penance, and cannot actually enter except by faith and by baptism, which through an external rite, signifies and produces an interior regeneration.”

29.) Pope Leo XIII, *Adiutricem*, On the Rosary, (1895):

“Through you, O Blessed Virgin, Mother of God, the Apostles have preached salvation to the nations; through you the demons have been put to rout and mankind has been summoned back to Heaven; through you every misguided creature held in the thrall of idols is led to recognize the truth; through you have the *faithful been brought to the laver of holy Baptism* and churches been founded among every people.”

30.) Pope St. Zosimus, Apostolic Letter to the Oriental Churches (418):

“Not one of our children is held not guilty until he is freed through Baptism.” (Denz. 109a)

31.) Pope St. Leo the Great (Epistle XV:10):

“Since by the transgression of the first man, the whole progeny of the human race is vitiated; no one can be freed from the condition of the old man except by the sacrament of the Baptism of Christ.”

32.) Pope St. Gregory the Great (*Moralia* IV, Preface 3):

“Whoever is not loosed by the waters of rebirth remains bound by the first chain of guilt.”

- 33.) **Benedict XIV**, Bull *Nuper ad Nos*, Solemn Profession of Faith Prescribed for Maronites, (1743):

“Likewise, I profess that Baptism is necessary for salvation.” (Denz. 1470)

- 34.) **Pope Innocent III**, Solemn Profession of Faith Prescribed to the Waldensians (1208):

“And we believe that all sins are remitted in baptism, the original sin which has been contracted as well as those committed voluntarily.” (Denz. 424)

- 35.) **Pope Innocent III**, *Apostolic Letter on Baptism* (1201):

“But through the Sacrament of Baptism the guilt of one made red by the Blood of Christ is remitted, and to the kingdom of Heaven one also arrives, whose gate the Blood of Christ has mercifully opened for the faithful.” (Denz. 410)

- 36.) **St. Gregory Nanzianzen**, Oration of the Holy Lights:

“Of those who fail to be baptized, some are utterly animal or bestial; others honor Baptism but they delay; some out of carelessness, some because of insatiable passion. Still others are not able to receive Baptism because of infancy or some voluntary circumstance which prevents their receiving the gift, even if they desire it. I think the first group will have to suffer punishment, not only for their other sins, but also for their contempt of Baptism. The second group will also be punished, but less, because it was not through wickedness so much as foolishness that brought their failure. The third group will be neither glorified, nor punished; for, although unsealed, they are not wicked. If you were able to judge a man who intends to commit murder solely by his intention and without any act of murder, then you could likewise reckon as baptized one who desired Baptism, without having received Baptism. But, since you cannot do the former, how can you do the latter? Put it this way: if desire has equal power with actual Baptism, you would then be satisfied to desire Glory, as though that longing

itself were Glory! Do you suffer by not attaining the actual Glory, so long as you have a desire for it? I cannot see it!"

37.) St. Ambrose, De Mysteriis, Chapter 4:

"One is the baptism which the Church administers, of water and the Holy Ghost, with which catechumens need to be baptized. Nor does the mystery of regeneration exist at all without water. Now, even the catechumen believes; but unless he be baptized, he cannot receive remission of his sins."

"No one ascends into the kingdom of Heaven except by the Sacrament of Baptism. No one is excused from Baptism: not infants nor anyone hindered by any necessity. When the Lord Jesus came to John and John said, 'I ought to be baptized by Thee, and dost Thou come to me?' Jesus said: 'Permit it to be so for now. For this it becometh us to fulfill all justice' (Matt. 3, 14-15). Behold how all justice rests on Baptism."

38.) Pope St. Sylvester, Nicene Creed (325):

"I confess one baptism unto the remission of sins."

39.) Pope Eugene IV, Council of Florence (1439):

"...more over the souls of those who depart in actual mortal sin or *in original sin only*, descend immediately into hell but to undergo punishments of different kinds." (Denz. 693)

In return for answering your questions, I ask that you please sit down with me so we can go over the Faith together. I pray every day for Catholic unity, but unity can be had only in Truth. Comfort is in numbers. We cannot save the Church – the Church saves us. The fundamental Dogmas and teachings that state all people *must* be Catholic to be saved and that the Sacrament of Baptism is necessary to mark one as a Catholic need to be restored, preached, and lived. There is no other way to salvation except through these clear teachings of our Holy Mother Church. It comes down to humility and simply living and teaching the purity of the Catholic Faith under Our Lady's Precious Mantle. To continue to teach otherwise is to deceive people about the Truth, and without the Truth we cannot be saved.

After everything you have read and studied over the years, I ask you to answer these three simple questions with a *yes* or *no*:

- 1.) Are the Sacraments (an outward sign instituted by Christ) necessary for all men to be saved? Yes or No
- 2.) Is the Sacrament of Baptism necessary to mark someone as a Catholic? Yes or No
- 3.) Do all people need to be marked as a Catholic to get to Heaven? Yes or No

The Catholic Church teaches **YES** to all three questions. I hope you answered the same.

In the Hearts of Jesus and Mary,
Rev. Father Dominic Crawford

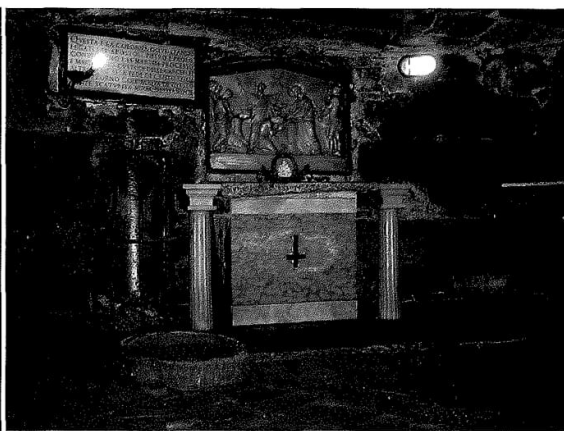
ADDENDUM: When people questioned the priests of Vatican II in the 1960's, they were expected to keep silent and go along with what they were told, or to get out. Few people held strong to the Pillars of the Faith against the liberalizing clergy. Aren't you doing the same thing today? Why are you telling people to keep silent and go along with whatever you say or get out? There are people willing to sit down and objectively discuss the faith with you, and the response they are given is "Keep silent or get out." Keeping the people ignorant is deceitful and deception is a tool of Satan. I recall at a priests' meeting in Nebraska where you stated that "there are certain parents who believe that Natural Family Planning is wrong and that there is only one Baptism unto the remission of sins, but that their children do not really believe. In twenty or thirty years the parents will be dead." These words have never left my heart and mind, and I pray every day that Our Lady will intercede for those souls influenced by these false notions and that they will start seeking the Truth once again. It is simple, Natural Family Planning is wrong and there is one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism. This one Baptism includes water and through the Sacrament of Baptism Original sin is removed, and we are marked as members of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. This mark is necessary for a person to be saved. There is no authority that can overrule the Church's Solemn Teachings.

The Solemn Magisterium (the Supreme Court) of the Catholic Church has spoken once and for all.

God has worked countless miracles to bring the Sacrament of Baptism to people. St. Martin of Tours raised a catechumen from the dead so that he could baptize him. This was done in the 4th Century A.D.

Why would God work countless miracles if people “could be saved” without the Sacrament of Baptism? Because God will never be unfaithful to His promises, and Holy Mother Church has defended literally Christ’s infallible words:

“Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven.” (John 3, 5)



St. Peter, the first pope, was imprisoned on two separate occasions during his 25 years reign as the Vicar of Christ. St. Peter was kept in the Mamertine Prison (picture above) at the base of the Capitoline Hill in Rome during his second Roman imprisonment. Access to the prison was through a hole in the ceiling, and above the prison was a room for the prison guards.

God worked a miracle by causing water to gush forth in the prison for St. Peter to baptize the converts he was preaching to (including two jailers). Today this spring of water is situated next to the altar.

“Heaven and earth shall pass away but My words shall not pass away.”
(Matt. 24: 35)

Revision Log

Revisions to syntax, typography, spelling, grammar, etc. will not be recorded unless they substantially change the meaning of an argument. Otherwise this log will catalog any revisions made to *Contra Crawford* that bear more directly on content.

- **Version 1.1:** An historical mistake regarding Pope St. Leo the Great's letter to Flavian was corrected (pp. 101-02 & 118). The previous version argued that Pope Leo's letter was entirely distinct from the Council of Chalcedon, but the letter was in fact read and accepted at the council. Resultantly previous mentions of the letter being mis-cited by Crawford have been removed, and more attention has been paid to the letter's actual content, context, and meaning than in the previous version.
 - A minor citation error on page 47 was fixed. Fr. Laux's work is now cited simply as "page 119" whereas the previous version read "*volume 1*, page 119."

